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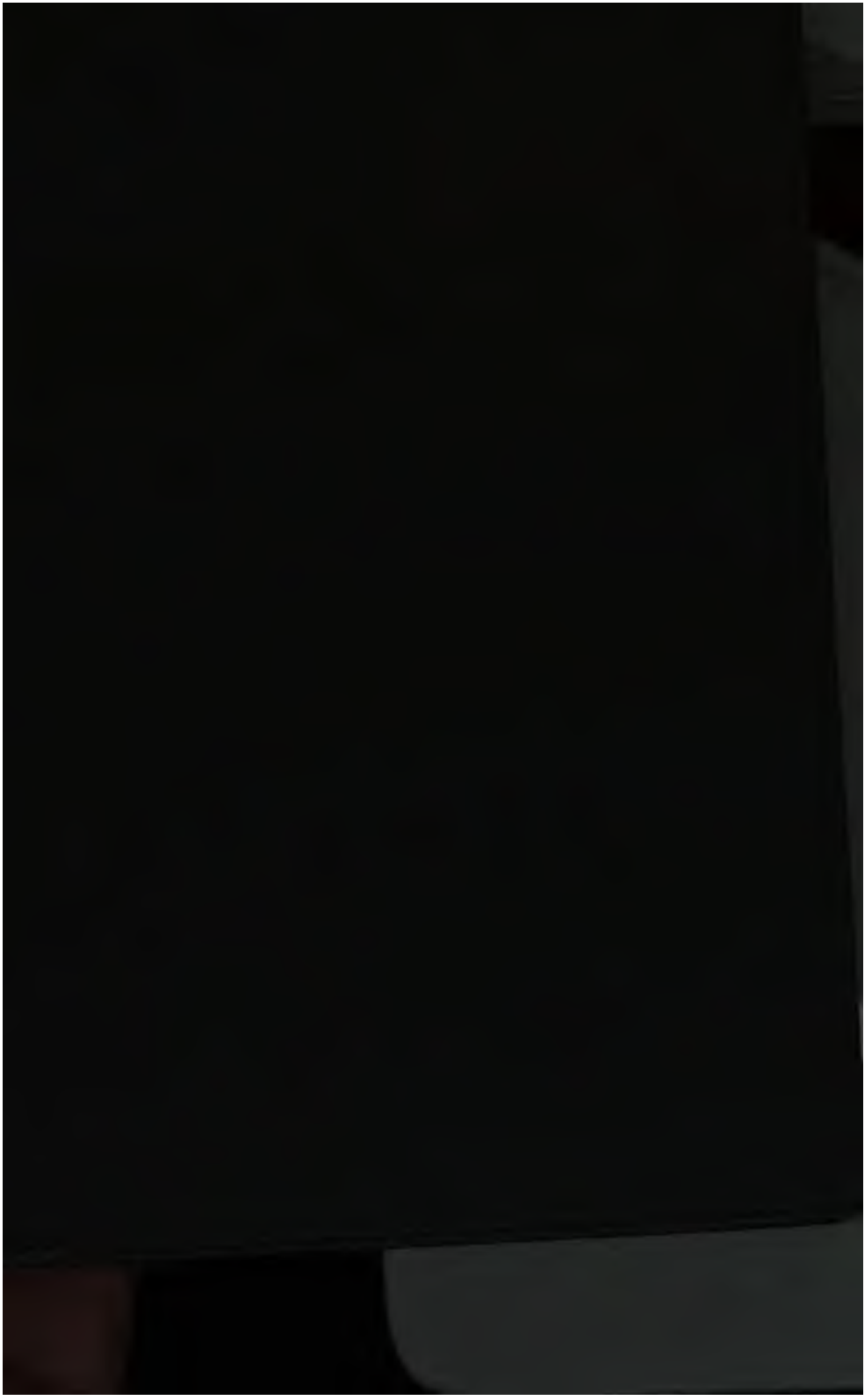

Standard Library Edition

THE WRITINGS
OF
CHARLES DICKENS

WITH

CRITICAL AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL INTRODUCTIONS
AND NOTES BY EDWIN PERCY WHIPPLE
AND OTHERS

ILLUSTRATED WITH STEEL PORTRAITS AND ENGRAVINGS FROM THE ORIGINAL DESIGNS BY BROWNE, CRUIKSHANK LEECH, AND OTHERS

IN THIRTY-TWO VOLUMES

VOLUME XXX

LIFE, LETTERS, AND SPEECHES

OF

CHARLES DICKENS

WITH BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF THE PRINCIPAL ILLUSTRATORS OF DICKENS'S WORKS .

ILLUSTRATED WITH ENGRAVINGS ON STEEL

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. I

BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN AND COMPANY
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PREFACE

THE wonderful vitality of Charles Dickens is apparent in his writings as collected in the previous volumes of this edition. Yet there is another illustration of his genius to be seen in his voluminous correspondence, and this correspondence shows the man in the friendly relations which he held both with men of letters and artists of his generation, and with others socially responsive. His letters then belong among his writings most distinctly, and the present collection is gathered from Forster's Life and from the collection published by Miss Hogarth and Miss Dickens, the latter containing a number of very lively letters, originally printed by Mr. Fields in his "Yesterdays with Authors." It does not profess to be an exhaustive collection, even as the sources from which it is drawn are selective, but it is so full as to offer abundant illustration of the private and public life of a man very open in his disclosure of himself.

The sketch of the life of Dickens which opens the first of these two volumes is intended to give a continuous survey of his career, and to intimate some of the influences which helped to form his character and give direction to his genius. The succession of his writings is given, but the several introductions to the volumes in this series are so full of details respecting the development of the great novels and more noted tales that it has not seemed desirable in this sketch to go over that ground again to any extent.

The artists who shared Dickens's labor and fame form a group so identified with his work as to awaken an interest in their personality, and an attempt has been made to outline the careers of the most conspicuous of these.

Finally, a reader of Dickens's life and his letters is sure to

observe how much he was in demand as an after-dinner speaker, and as an orator on public occasions, both as a representative of literature, and as in sympathy with humanitarian movements. His more important speeches therefore are added to the letters, in the second volume, and a full index gives the reader a clue to persons and incidents in the entire work.

Boston, December 1, 1894.

CONTENTS

VOLUME I

A SKETCH OF THE LIFE OF CHARLES DICKENS.

Page

I. Early Years 1
II. First Essays at Life 15
III. "Pickwick" 20
IV. Many Irons in the Fire 24
V. First Visit to America 29
VI. Italy, Switzerland, and Paris 35
VII. The Culmination 40
VIII. Unrest 47
IX. Gadshill and a Broken Home 52
X. Public Readings 57
XI. "All the Year Round" and its Stories 61
XII. Second Visit to America 68
XIII. Last Years 78

ILLUSTRATORS OF DICKENS'S WORKS.

I. Hablot Knight Browne 81
II. George Cruikshank 85
III. George Cattermole 89
IV. Daniel Maclise 91
V. John Leech 93
VI. Frederick Walker 96
VII. Frank Stone and Marcus Stone 98
VIII. Felix Octavius Carr Darley 100
IX. Sol Eytinge 104

LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS.

I. Henry Austin 105
II. Editor of "The Morning Chronicle" 105
III. Catherine Hogarth 106
IV. John Hullah 107
V. The Same 107
VI. The Same 108
VII. John Forster 109
VIII. The Same 109
IX. The Same 110
X. The Same 111
XI. W. C. Macready 112
XII. Mrs. Charles Dickens 113

XIII. Thomas Mitton 114
XIV. Thomas Noon Talfourd. 115
XV. Mrs. Charles Dickens 116
XVI. W. C. Macready 118
XVII. The Same 119
XVIII. The Same. 119
XIX. W. L. Sammons 120
XX. John Forster 121
XXI. George Cattermole 123
XXII. J. P. Harley 124
XXIII. W. C. Macready 125
XXIV. Edward Chapman 126
XXV. George Cattermole 127
XXVI. Daniel Maclise 128
XXVII. John Forster 129
XXVIII. George Cattermole 129
XXIX. The Same 130
XXX. The Same 131
XXXI. The Same. 131
XXXII. John Tomlin 132
XXXIII. R. Monckton Milnes 133
XXXIV. Daniel Maclise 133
XXXV. William Harrison Ainsworth 136
XXXVI. G. Lovejoy 136
XXXVII. The Same. 137
XXXVIII. John Forster 137
XXXIX. The Same 139
XL. George Cattermole 139
XLI. The Same 140
XLII. W. C. Macready 141
XLIII. John Forster 142
XLIV. The Same. 142
XLV. Mrs. Hogarth 143
XLVI. Mary Talfourd 143
XLVII. Washington Irving 144
XLVIII. Thomas Mitton 146
XLIX. John Forster 146
L. The Same 147
LI. Thomas Mitton 148
LII. John Forster 149
LIII. The Same 155
LIV. C. C. Felton 156
LV. John Forster 158
LVI. Washington Irving 159
LVII. W. C. Macready 160
LVIII. Thomas Mitton 164
LIX. John Forster 166
LX. Henry Austin 168
LXI. C. C. Felton. 171
LXII. The Same. 173
LXIII. John Forster 175
LXIV. C. C. Felton 176

LXV. Henry Austin 178
LXVI. Thomas Hood 179
LXVII. Mrs. Frances Trollope 179
LXVIII. George Cattermole 180
LXIX. C. C. Felton 180
LXX. Macvey Napier 183
LXXI. C. C. Felton 185
LXXII. Douglas Jerrold 187
LXXIII. David Dickson 189
LXXIV. Douglas Jerrold 190
LXXV. C. C. Felton 191
LXXVI. Macvey Napier 195
LXXVII. R. H. Horne 196
LXXVIII. John Forster 196
LXXIX. C. C. Felton 197
LXXX. W. C. Macready 199
LXXXI. Mrs. Charles Dickens 202
LXXXII. Countess of Blessington 203
LXXXIII. T. J. Thompson 204
LXXXIV. The Same 204
LXXXV. Edwin Landseer 205
LXXXVI. Daniel Maclise 205
LXXXVII. Clarkson Stanfield 209
LXXXVIII. John Forster 213
LXXXIX. Mrs. Charles Dickens 215
XC. Douglas Jerrold 218
XCI. Mrs. Charles Dickens 220
XCII. The Same 222
XCIII. Thomas Mitton 223
XCIV. John Forster 228
XCV. Macvey Napier 229
XCVI. W. C. Macready 231
XCVII. Clarkson Stanfield 232
XCVIII. Macvey Napier 233
XCIX. Miss Marion Ely 234
C. John Forster 234
CI. The Same 235
CII. The Same 237
CIII. The Same 238
CIV. W. C. Macready 239
CV. Walter Savage Landor 241
CVI. Hon. Richard Watson 242
CVII. M. Cerjat 244
CVIII. John Forster 246
CIX. Countess of Blessington 247
CX. Rev. Edward Tagart 249
CXI. Miss Mary Dickens 251
CXII. Miss Hogarth 252
CXIII. Dr. Hodgson 253
CXIV. Miss Marguerite Power 254
CXV. Mr. H. P. Smith 255
CXVI. Miss Marguerite Power 256

CXVII. Miss Hogarth 257
CXVIII. Editor of "The Sun" 258
CXIX. William Charles Kent 258
CXX. John Forster 258
CXXI. Rev. James White 261
CXXII. Mrs. Cowden Clarke 262
CXXIII. The Hon. Mrs. Watson 263
CXXIV. W. C. Macready 264
CXXV. Frank Stone 265
CXXVI. Mark Lemon 267
CXXVII. Miss Dickens 268
CXXVIII. Mrs. Charles Dickens 268
CXXIX. Mark Lemon 268
CXXX. Rev. James White 269
CXXXI. Joseph C. King 270
CXXXII. M. de Cerjat 271
CXXXIII. James Sheridan Knowles 274
CXXXIV. Mrs. Gaskell 274
CXXXV. Rev. James White 275
CXXXVI. W. H. Wills 276
CXXXVII. Mrs. Charles Dickens 276
CXXXVIII. The Hon. Mrs. Watson 278
CXXXIX. Walter Savage Landor 279
CXL. The Hon. Mrs. Watson 279
CXLI. The Same 280
CXLII. The Same 282
CXLIII. Miss Mary Boyle 284
CXLIV. W. C. Macready 285
CXLV. W. H. Wills 286
CXLVI. W. C. Macready 287
CXLVII. The Hon. Mrs. Watson 289
CXLVIII. Charles Knight 292
CXLIX. Henry Austin 293
CL. Frank Stone 294
CLI. Henry Austin 295
CLII. Miss Mary Boyle 296
CLIII. Mr. Eeles 296
CLIV. Henry Austin 297
CLV. Mrs. Charles Dickens 298
CLVI. Mrs. Gaskell 299
CLVII. W. C. Macready 300
CLVIII. Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton 302
CLIX. Mrs. Cowden Clarke 303
CLX. James Bower Harrison 304
CLXI. Charles Knight 304
CLXII. Lord John Russell 305
CLXIII. Miss Mary Boyle 305
CLXIV. Charles Knight 306
CLXV. Mark Lemon 306
CLXVI. The Earl of Carlisle 307
CLXVII. The Hon. Mrs. Watson 307
CLXVIII. John Forster 309

CLXIX. W. C. Macready 311
CLXX. W. H. Wills 312
CLXXI. The Same 313
CLXXII. John Watkins 314
CLXXIII. Rev. James White 315
CLXXIV. The Hon. Mrs. Watson 315
CLXXV. Rev. James White 317
CLXXVI. Mrs. Gaskell 318
CLXXVII. W. H. Wills 318
CLXXVIII. Rev. James White 318
CLXXIX. Mrs. Gaskell 319
CLXXX. Wilkie Collins 319
CLXXXI. Frank Stone, A. R. A. 320
CLXXXII. W. H. Wills 321
CLXXXIII. G. Linnaeus Banks 321
CLXXXIV. Clarkson Stanfield 322
CLXXXV. W. C. Macready 322
CLXXXVI. Mrs. Gaskell 323
CLXXXVII. Monsieur Regnier 324
CLXXXVIII. W. H. Wills 325
CLXXXIX. The Same 325
CXC. Frank Stone, A. R. A. 326
CXCI. John Forster 327
CXCII. The Same 330
CXCIII. W. H. Wills 331
CXCIV. The Same 332
CXCV. The Hon. Mrs. Watson 333
CXCVI. Peter Cunningham 335
CXCVII. Walter Savage Landor 336
CXCVIII. John Delane 337
CXCIX. W. H. Wills 338
CC. The Lord John Russell 339
CCI. The Hon. Mrs. Watson 340
CCII. Mrs. Charles Dickens 341
CCIII. The Same 343
CCIV. Miss Hogarth 346
CCV. The Same 347
CCVI. Mrs. Charles Dickens 348
'CCVII. The Same 351
CCVIII. Miss Hogarth 353
CCIX. The Same 356
CCX. Sir James Emerson Tennent 359
CCXI. Mrs. Charles Dickens 360
CCXII. W. H. Wills 362
CCXIII. The Same 363
CCXIV. Miss Hogarth 365
CCXV. The Hon. Mrs. Watson 367
CCXVI. Miss Mary Boyle 369
CCXVII. M. de Cerjat 370
CCXVIII. Charles Knight 372
CCXIX. Rev. James White 373
CCXX. Charles Knight 374

CCXXI. W. H. Wills 374
CCXXII. B. W. Procter 376
CCXXIII. Mrs. Gaskell 377
CCXXIV. Frank Stone, A. R. A. 377
CCXXV. W. H. Wills 378
CCXXVI. Wilkie Collins 379
CCXXVII. Miss Hogarth 380
CCXXVIII. W. H. Wills 380
CCXXIX. Mrs. Gaskell 381
CCXXX. Rev. William Harness 382
CCXXXI. Henry Austin 382
CCXXXII. Wilkie Collins 383
CCXXXIII. Frank Stone, A. R. A. 385
CCXXXIV. John Saunders 386
CCXXXV. W. C. Macready 388
CCXXXVI. The Hon. Mrs. Watson 389
CCXXXVII. Clarkson Stanfield, R. A. 392
CCXXXVIII. Miss A. A. Procter 392
CCXXXIX. M. de Cerjat 394
CCXL. Miss Mary Boyle 396
CCXLI. Mrs. Gaskell 396
CCXLII. Arthur Ryland 397
CCXLIII. Monsieur Regnier 398
CCXLIV. W. H. Wills 399
CCXLV. Miss King 399
CCXLVI. Miss Hogarth 400
CCXLVII. W. H. Wills 402
CCXLVIII. Miss King 403
CCXLIX. Arthur Ryland 403
CCL. David Roberts, R. A. 404
CCLI. W. M. Thackeray 405
CCLII. John Forster 405
CCLIII. Austen H. Layard 406
CCLIV. Mrs. Winter 407
CCLV. Austen H. Layard 409
CCLVI. John Forster 410
CCLVII. Mark Lemon 411
CCLVIII. Clarkson Stanfield, R. A. 411
CCLIX. The Same 412
CCLX. Mark Lemon 413
CCLXI. Frank Stone, A. R. A. 413
CCLXII. The Same 413
CCLXIII. Wilkie Collins 414
CCLXIV. Mrs. Trollope 414
CCLXV. Clarkson Stanfield, R. A. 415
CCLXVI. W. C. Macready 415
CCLXVII. Mrs. Winter 416
CCLXVIII. Wilkie Collins 417
CCLXIX. Miss Emily Jolly 418
CCLXX. Wilkie Collins 420
CCLXXI. Miss Emily Jolly 421
CCLXXII. W. H. Wills 421

CCLXXIII. The Hon. Mrs. Watson 422
CCLXXIV. Wilkie Collins 423
CCLXXV. W. C. Macready 424
CCLXXVI. Mrs. Charles Dickens 425
CCLXXVII. W. H. Wills 426
CCLXXVIII. The Same 426
CCLXXIX. The Same 428
CCLXXX. Monsieur Regnier 429
CCLXXXI. Madame Viardot 430
CCLXXXII. The Hon. Mrs. Watson 430

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

VOLUME I

Page

CHARLES DICKENS, 1838 . . . . . *Frontispiece*
After a drawing by Samuel Lawrence.

BIRTHPLACE OF CHARLES DICKENS 6
After a drawing by F. G. Kitton.

CHARLES DICKENS READING THE CHIMES, December 2, 1844 36
After a sketch by Daniel Maclise.

JOHN DICKENS (Father of Charles) 48
After a pencil drawing.

MRS. JOHN DICKENS (Mother of Charles) 66
After a pencil drawing.

TWENTY-NINE SKETCHES FOR MR. DOMBEY 82
By Hablot K. Browne.

CHARLES DICKENS, 1835 106
After a miniature by Rose Emma Drummond.

CHARLES DICKENS, 1837 116
After a drawing by H. K. Browne.

DANIEL MACLISE 128
After an engraving.

CHARLES DICKENS, 1842 146
After a painting by Francis Alexander.

CHARLES DICKENS, 1840-1843 166
After a drawing by R. J. Lane. (In possession of Queen Victoria.)

GEORGE CRUIKSHANK 186
After an engraving.

CHARLES DICKENS, HIS WIFE, AND HER SISTER, GEORGINA HOGARTH 1843 206
After a drawing by Daniel Maclise.

MRS. CHARLES DICKENS, 1846 232
After a painting by Daniel Maclise.

COUNTESS OF BLESSINGTON 248
After an engraving.

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR 336
After a painting by Nathaniel Dance.

MARK LEMON 414
After an engraving.

LIFE, LETTERS, AND SPEECHES OF CHARLES DICKENS

A SKETCH OF THE LIFE OF CHARLES DICKENS

I

EARLY YEARS

CHARLES JOHN HUFFAM DICKENS was born at No. 387 Commercial Road, Mile-End, Landport, Portsea by Portsmouth, England, a few minutes before midnight on Friday, the seventh of February, 1812. But let not the reader suppose that we intend to follow our subject with this particularity throughout his career: there are certain incidents in the life of every man that are of the first importance and should not be hurried over in any sketch, however brief; and his birth is one of such incidents, his name, his parentage, and the place of his birth being also of some importance. His Christian name was derived in order from his mother's father, Charles Barrow, his father, John Dickens, and his godfather, Christopher Huffam; he early disposed of two of the encumbrances, and in his first writings got rid of all three, as well as his surname, shortening himself into Boz, a nickname given by him to his younger brother. His mother, Elizabeth Barrow, though said by her grandson to have suggested the inconsecutive Mrs. Nickleby, must have been a woman of some intellectual character, since, when she was compelled to support her family, she resorted to school-teaching. Indeed, Dickens acknowledged his early indebtedness to her for an interest in reading. "I faintly remember," he says, "her teaching me the alphabet; and when I look upon the fat black letters in the primer, the puzzling novelty of their shapes, and the easy good nature of O and S, always seem to present themselves before me as they used to do." She started the child in Latin as well as in English, and

gave him a thorough and regular training in his earliest life. She lived until her son was fifty-one years old. John Dickens, the father, whose personality has been almost confounded with that of Wilkins Micawber, died in 1851 at the age of sixty-five when his son was thirty-nine. He is described in his later life by one of his old neighbors as a "chatty, pleasant companion, possessing a varied fund of anecdote, and a genuine vein of humor. He was a well-built man, rather stout, of very active habits, a little pompous, and very proud of his talented son. He dressed well, and wore a goodly bunch of seals suspended across his waistcoat from his watch chain." His son has sketched his character in these words: "I know my father to be as kind-hearted and generous a man as ever lived in the world. Everything that I can remember of his conduct to his wife, or children, or friends, in sickness or affliction, is beyond all praise. By me, as a sick child, he has watched night and day, unweariedly and patiently, many nights and days. He never undertook any business, charge, or trust, that he did not zealously, conscientiously, punctually, honorably discharge. His industry has always been untiring." He was a man of some cultivation in his taste for literature, since his shelves, in spite of a somewhat nomadic life, contained the works of Defoe, Smollett, Goldsmith, and Fielding, and the great collections of eighteenth century essays, The Spectator, The Tatler, The Idler, The Citizen of the World. He could have had no mean intellectual force, since when his regular occupation failed him, he took up the arduous work of a reporter at the age of forty-six and achieved a fair success in it. There was, however, a shiftlessness in the management of his affairs, and self-indulgence, which were not ill-expressed by a whimsical flourish in his language, substituting expansive phrases for close and exact details. His kind nature made him always ready to show sympathy with his children, but he appears to have shown only a moderate interest in their early education and preparation for active life. After Charles Dickens had made his own place, he provided for his father and mother.

Of brothers and sisters, Charles Dickens had eight. Three of these died in infancy, one when he was himself a baby, the other two when he was seven and eight years old. Of the others, two were his playmates when he was a child, Fanny

two years his senior, and Letitia Mary four years his junior. Both of these were afterward married. His brother Frederick was born when Charles was eight years old, Alfred Lamert when he was ten; later came a still younger brother, Augustus, born in 1827. Charles survived them all save Letitia. Fanny was the nearest to him, and shared most fully his young life.

His birth at Portsea was due to the fact that his father was a clerk in the Navy-Pay Office and at the time was stationed at Portsmouth, where he attended to the paying-off of ships. To the same fact it was owing that until eleven years of age Charles Dickens lived in a nautical atmosphere, first for four years at Portsea, and then for seven at Chatham. The hulks and marshes and the old Bill Barley of "Great Expectations," the "babby in the form of a great Sea Porkypine," his family, and his fascinating house of the naval order of architecture of "David Copperfield," and the more directly autobiographic sketches in "The Uncommercial Traveller" at once rise to the mind as carrying these early memories of the sea; but it is to be noticed how Dickens's references to the sea are confined almost wholly to the margin of it, for his own early experience upon the water seems to have been limited to occasional cruises on the Navy-Pay yacht, an old-fashioned, high-sterned sailing yacht, a sluggish craft which sometimes bore John Dickens and his children when he sailed on the Medway to Sheerness on the business of the Pay Office.

It is scarcely necessary to point out how keen an observer Dickens was, and how tenacious and far reaching was his memory. In his many pictures of early childhood he does not hesitate to dwell upon the consciousness of that age, because his own was an early birth. He told Forster that he recalled scenes at Portsmouth when he was two years old, and no doubt the removals from Portsea to London for a very brief time, and then from London to Chatham, and from one house to another, helped to fix scenes and places in his mind, for the memory is helped by these changes of residence. The Portsea residence was so brief that it could not supply him with much to draw upon in later years, though he recalled perfectly certain scenes when he came to write "Nicholas Nickleby" a quarter of a century later. But Chatham and the neighboring Rochester played a conspicuous part in his memory of his early life, especially as they became identified with his home in after years. In his

paper, Travelling Abroad, in "The Uncommercial Traveller," there is a passage, half reverie, half actual recollection, which refers to this connecting link of his childhood and age. He is travelling in fancy on the Dover road.

"So smooth was the old high road, and so fresh were the horses, and so fast went I, that it was midway between Gravesend and Rochester, and the widening river was bearing the ships, white-sailed or black-smoked, out to sea, when I noticed by the wayside a very queer small boy.

"'Holloa!' said I, to the very queer small boy, 'where do you live?'

"'At Chatham,' says he.

"'What do you do there?' says I.

"'I go to school,' says he.

"I took him up in a moment and we went on. Presently the very queer small boy says, 'This is Gad's Hill we are coming to, where Falstaff went out to rob those travellers, and ran away.'

"'You know something about Falstaff, eh?' said I.

"'All about him,' said the very queer small boy. 'I am old (I am nine) and I read all sorts of books. But *do* let us stop at the top of the hill, and look at the house there, if you please!'

"'You admire that house?' said I.

"'Bless you, sir,' said the very queer small boy, 'when I was not more than half as old as nine, it used to be a treat for me to be brought to look at it. And ever since I can recollect, my father, seeing me so fond of it, has often said to me, "If you were to be very persevering, and were to work hard, you might some day come to live in it!" Though that's impossible!' said the very queer small boy, drawing a long breath, and now staring at the house out of window with all his might.

"I was rather amazed to be told this by the very queer small boy; for that house happens to be *my* house, and I have reason to believe that what he said was true."

We have already seen how Dickens had all sorts of books to read. The vividness which they possessed for him is apparent in a record which he once made of his personal recollections: "I had a greedy relish for a few volumes of voyages and travels — I forget what, now — that were on those shelves; and for days and days I can remember to have gone about my region of

our house, armed with the centre-piece out of an old set of boat-trees: the perfect realization of Captain Somebody of the royal British Navy, in danger of being beset by savages, and resolved to sell his life at a great price. . . . When I think of it, the picture always rises in my mind, of a summer evening, the boys at play in the churchyard, and I sitting on my bed, reading as if for life. Every barn in the neighborhood, every stone in the church, and every foot of the churchyard, had some association of its own, in my mind, connected with these books, and stood for some locality made famous in them." It points to his lively interest in the literature which he then read that he named one of his own sons Henry Fielding.

As for his schooling, after the introduction by his mother to the rudiments of English and Latin he went to a small school kept by Mr. William Giles, along with his sister Fanny, the children of officers of the garrison, Mr. Giles's own younger brothers and sisters, and some of the children of the neighborhood. Like little David Copperfield, Charles and his boy friends wore much battered white beaver hats as regulation school costume. It was a friendly relation which he held with his master, and in the flush of his fame when half through "Pickwick," no recognition came more gratefully than the silver snuff-box, inscribed, "to the inimitable Boz," which his old schoolmaster sent him.

Besides his books and his schooling he had his first acquaintance with that other academy which played an important part in his life, the theatre. At the Theatre Royal, Rochester, he saw Richard the Third "in a very uncomfortable cloak," who made his heart "leap with terror by backing up against the stage-box," in which he was posted, "while struggling for life against the virtuous Richmond;" and he defended himself later against the charge of editing Grimaldi's memoirs without the supposed indispensable advantage of having seen the great comedian by the humorous statement: "Although I was brought up from remote country parts in the dark ages of 1819 and 1820 to behold the splendor of Christmas pantomimes and the humor of Joe, in whose honor I am informed I clapped my hands with great precocity, and although I even saw him act in the remote times of 1823, yet as I had not then aspired to the dignity of a tail-coat, though forced by a relentless parent into my first pair of boots, I am willing, with the view of

saving this honest gentleman further time and trouble, to concede that I had not arrived at man's estate when Grimaldi left the stage, and that my recollections of his acting are, to my loss, but shadowy and imperfect."

As a natural consequence of voracious reading and some theatre going, he began his literary career by writing at this time a tragedy called "Misnar, the Sultan of India," founded on one of the Tales of the Genii, and he anticipated his own clever acting in amateur theatricals by much singing of sea-songs at the Mitre Inn, with an occasional duet with his sister Fanny, the dining-table furnishing a convenient stage. Or he would use the family kitchen for a theatre and with his friend George Stroughill, the Struggles of Dingley Dell, act parts of plays and recite with much gesticulation such highly moral songs as Dr. Watts's "The Voice of the Sluggard." Did not Mr. Pecksniff also deliver a full verse of this morality from the top landing of Mrs. Todgers's?

After all, it is a boy's vagrancy which counts in his growth, quite as much as his orderly and determined life, and Dickens has given abundant evidence of the variety of resources which he had in boyhood for exercising his eyes and his wit. In his lightly veiled reminiscences under the pretended sketch of Dullborough Down, he sets forth the scene which met him as he left the railway train at Chatham station, and looked for the playing-field, only to discover that it had been swallowed up by the railway.

"It was gone. The two beautiful hawthorn-trees, the hedge, the turf, and all those buttercups and daisies, had given place to the stoniest of jolting roads; while beyond the station an ugly dark monster of a tunnel kept its jaws open, as if it had swallowed them and were ravenous for more destruction. When I had been let out at the platform door, like a prisoner whom his turnkey grudgingly released, I looked in again over the low wall, at the scene of departed glories. Here, in the haymaking time, had I been delivered from the dungeons of Seringapatam, an immense pile (of haycock), by my countrymen, the victorious British (boy next door and his two cousins), and had been recognized with ecstasy by my affianced one (Miss Green), who had come all the way from England (second house in the terrace) to ransom me and marry me." In his Christmas Tree and Nurse's Stories also he gives further clues

to his childish experiences and fancies in this imaginative period, and indeed in his many pictures of early childhood, whether in novel or in fleeting sketch, he appears to have taken his suggestion rather from his recollection of himself than from his observation of others.

It was a not unhappy childhood, but it passed into a clouded youth. Mr. John Dickens had been recalled from Chatham to London and his salary cut down, in a general scheme of government retrenchment. Moreover he was in debt, and his creditors were pressing him. There appears to have been a brief period of struggle with these untoward circumstances, and then an extinguisher was put upon the head of the family: he was arrested and confined in a debtor's prison; apparently this put an end also to his connection with the Navy-Pay Office, and the family was now dependent on what the mother could do, and what the older children could earn.

Mrs. Dickens had already tried to turn her resources to account. A house was taken in Gower Street, and the door was decorated with a large brass plate inscribed MRS. DICKENS'S ESTABLISHMENT. The teaching which had served Fanny and Charles so well was to be offered to others, but the experiment never got beyond the offer. Dickens relates: "I left, at a great many other doors, a great many circulars calling attention to the merits of the establishment. Yet nobody ever came to school, nor do I recollect that anybody ever proposed to come, or that the least preparation was made to receive anybody. But I know that we got on very badly with the butcher and baker; that very often we had not too much for dinner; and that at last my father was arrested."

To a sensitive, not over strong, and imaginative boy, an introduction to the squalor and misery of a debtor's prison, especially when the association of that prison was with the life there of his own father, could scarcely fail to bring a familiarity with forms of ill which would strike deep into the soul; and it is not unreasonable to suppose that as the picturesqueness of Chatham and Rochester enlivened the fancy of Dickens when he came to deal with the margin of sea life, so the dark lines of poverty and sordid evil which scored the years immediately following his careless childhood were followed by his imagination in after years when his maturer judgment and his quickened emotion made him indignant at wrong and sympathetic

with suffering. The boy passed back and forth between the prison and his scarcely less miserable home; he saw their possessions dwindling as they tried to keep the wolf from the door; he was himself the messenger to the pawnbroker and has left a vivid description of this experience in "David Copperfield." Again and again, in "Pickwick," in "Little Dorrit," in "David Copperfield" he returned to minute description of the foul blot on England's Christianity, but it is still more to the purpose, that by this enforced fellowship with poverty and wretchedness he was enabled to reconstruct a world only feebly known to the casual visitor. At last the Dickens household was reduced to such remnants of its former humble estate as were represented by a few chairs, a kitchen table, and some beds, and was shut in to two rooms in the Gower Street house.

It was sad that, having slowly emptied the cup, the little fellow was to drain the dregs. When the family had been living in Chatham, Mrs. Dickens's sister Mrs. Mary Allen, a widow, was one of the household and at that time married a surgeon of the neighborhood, Dr. Matthew Lamert, the original apparently of Dr. Slammer of "Pickwick." Dr. Lamert had a son James by his former wife, a boy somewhat older than Charles and very friendly toward him. After the family moved to London James Lamert at first made his home with them. It was through this connection that Charles was now given an opportunity at least to relieve the family of his charge, and perhaps to add a little even to the family support. Fanny had, on first coming to London, been admitted as a pupil at the Royal Academy of Music and was qualifying herself to teach. None of the other children as we have seen was old enough to be a wage-earner. Charles was in his twelfth year when he was set at work in an establishment for making shoe-blacking, which had been set up, in rivalry with Warren's more famous one, by a near kinsman of James Lamert's, James himself being engaged in it. As the incident made a very deep impression on Dickens, it is worth while to give the account in his own words: —

"In an evil hour for me, as I often bitterly thought, its chief manager, James Lamert, the relative who had lived with us in Bayham Street, seeing how I was employed from day to day, and knowing what our domestic circumstances then were, proposed that I should go into the blacking-warehouse, to be as

useful as I could, at a salary, I think, of six shillings a week. I am not clear whether it was six or seven. I am inclined to believe, from my uncertainty on this head, that it was six at first and seven afterwards. At any rate, the offer was accepted very willingly by my father and mother, and on a Monday morning I went down to the blacking-warehouse to begin my business life.

"It is wonderful to me how I could have been so easily cast away at such an age. It is wonderful to me that, even after my descent into the poor little drudge I had been since we came to London, no one had compassion enough on me — a child of singular abilities, quick, eager, delicate, and soon hurt, bodily or mentally — to suggest that something might have been spared, as certainly it might have been, to place me at any common school. Our friends, I take it, were tired out. No one made any sign. My father and mother were quite satisfied. They could hardly have been more so if I had been twenty years of age, distinguished at a grammar school, and going to Cambridge.

"The blacking-warehouse was the last house on the left hand side of the way, at old Hungerford Stairs. It was a crazy, tumble-down house, abutting of course on the river, and literally overrun with rats. Its wainscoted rooms, and its rotten floors and staircase, and the old gray rats swarming down in the cellars, and the sound of their squeaking and scuffling coming up the stairs at all times, and the dirt and decay of the place rise up vividly before me, as if I were there again. The counting-house was on the first floor, looking over the coal barges and the river. There was a recess in it, in which I was to sit and work. My work was to cover the pots of paste-blacking; first with a piece of oil paper, and then with a piece of blue paper; to tie them round with a string; and then to clip the paper close and neat, all round, until it looked as smart as a pot of ointment from an apothecary's shop. When a certain number of grosses of pots had attained this pitch of perfection, I was to paste on each a printed label, and then go on again with more pots. Two or three other boys were kept at similar duty down stairs on similar wages. One of them came up in a ragged apron and a paper cap, on the first Monday morning, to show me the trick of using the string and tying the knot. His name was Bob Fagin; and I

took the liberty of using his name, long afterwards, in 'Oliver Twist.'

"Our relative had kindly arranged to teach me something in the dinner-hour, from twelve to one I think it was, every day. But an arrangement so incompatible with counting-house business soon died away, from no fault of his or mine; and, for the same reason, my small work-table, and my grosses of pots, my papers, string, scissors, paste-pot, and labels, by little and little, vanished out of the recess in the counting-house, and kept company with the other small work-tables, grosses of pots, papers, string, scissors, and paste-pots, down stairs. It was not long before Bob Fagin and I, and another boy whose name was Paul Green, but who was currently believed to have been christened Poll (a belief which I transferred, long afterwards again, to Mr. Sweedlepipe, in 'Martin Chuzzlewit'), worked generally, side by side. Bob Fagin was an orphan, and lived with his brother-in-law, a waterman. Poll Green's father had the additional distinction of being a fireman, and was employed at Drury Lane Theatre; where another relation of Poll's, I think his little sister, did imps in the pantomimes.

"No words can express the secret agony of my soul as I sank into this companionship; compared these every day associates with those of my happier childhood; and felt my early hopes of growing up to be a learned and distinguished man crushed in my breast. The deep remembrance of the sense I had of being utterly neglected and hopeless; of the shame I felt in my position; of the misery it was to my young heart to believe that, day by day, what I had learned, and thought, and delighted in, and raised my fancy and my emulation up by, was passing away from me, never to be brought back any more; cannot be written. My whole nature was so penetrated with the grief and humiliation of such considerations that even now, famous and caressed and happy, I often forget in my dreams that I have a dear wife and children; even that I am a man; and wander desolately back to that time of my life.

"My mother and my brothers and sisters (excepting Fanny in the Royal Academy of Music) were still encamped, with a young servant girl from Chatham workhouse, in the two parlors in the emptied house in Gower Street north. It was a long way to go and return within the dinner hour, and usually I either carried my dinner with me, or went and bought it at

some neighboring shop. In the latter case, it was commonly a saveloy and a penny loaf; sometimes a fourpenny plate of beef from a cook's shop; sometimes a plate of bread and cheese, and a glass of beer, from a miserable old public-house over the way: the Swan, if I remember right, or the Swan and something else that I have forgotten. Once, I remember tucking my own bread (which I had brought from home in the morning) under my arm, wrapped up in a piece of paper like a book, and going into the best dining-room in Johnson's alamode beef-house in Clare Court, Drury Lane, and magnificently ordering a small plate of alamode beef to eat with it. What the waiter thought of such a strange little apparition, coming in all alone, I don't know; but I can see him now, staring at me as I ate my dinner, and bringing up the other waiter to look. I gave him a halfpenny, and I wish, now, that he had n't taken it. . . .

"I know I do not exaggerate, unconsciously and unintentionally, the scantiness of my resources and the difficulties of my life. I know that if a shilling or so were given me by any one, I spent it in a dinner or a tea. I know that I worked, from morning to night, with common men and boys, a shabby child. I know that I tried, but ineffectually, not to anticipate my money, and to make it last the week through; by putting it away in a drawer I had in the counting-house, wrapped into six little parcels, each parcel containing the same amount and labelled with a different day. I know that I have lounged about the streets, insufficiently and unsatisfactorily fed. I know that, but for the mercy of God, I might easily have been, for any care that was taken of me, a little robber or a little vagabond.

"But I held some station at the blacking-warehouse too. Besides that my relative at the counting-house did what a man so occupied and dealing with a thing so anomalous, could, to treat me as one upon a different footing from the rest, I never said, to man or boy, how it was that I came to be there, or gave the least indication of being sorry that I was there. That I suffered in secret, and that I suffered exquisitely, no one ever knew but I. How much I suffered, it is, as I have said already, utterly beyond my power to tell. No man's imagination can overstep the reality. But I kept my own counsel and I did my work. I knew from the first that, if I could not

do my work as well as any of the rest, I could not hold myself above slight and contempt. I soon became at least as expeditious and as skilful with my hands as either of the other boys. Though perfectly familiar with them, my conduct and manners were different enough from theirs to place a space between us. They, and the men, always spoke of me as 'the young gentleman.' A certain man (a soldier once) named Thomas, who was the foreman, and another named Harry, who was the carman and wore a red jacket, used to call me 'Charles' sometimes, in speaking to me; but I think it was mostly when we were very confidential, and when I had made some efforts to entertain them over our work with the results of some of the old readings, which were fast perishing out of my mind. Poll Green uprose once, and rebelled against the 'young gentleman' usage; but Bob Fagin settled him speedily."

This is not the entire narrative, but it is enough to disclose the feeling which Dickens had regarding the incident, leading him to say upon narrating the conclusion of the whole matter, "From that hour until this at which I write, no word of that part of my childhood which I have now gladly brought to a close has passed my lips to any human being. I have no idea how long it lasted; whether for a year, or much more, or less. From that hour until this my father and my mother have been stricken dumb upon it. I have never heard the least allusion to it, however far off and remote, from either of them. I have never, until I now impart it to this paper, in any burst of confidence with any one, my own wife not excepted, raised the curtain I then dropped, thank God." How keenly he felt the misery of the situation not only these words tell, but quite as emphatically the use which he made of his experience not only in "David Copperfield," where one need only substitute the blacking establishment for the wine-house, but in various other sketches and novels in which he draws upon his memory. In "Sketches by Boz," there is a shabby genteel man in the Seven Dials who writes poems for "Warren." There are references in "Pickwick" and "Oliver Twist"; in "Nicholas Nickleby" Tim Linkinwater tells of the little cripple who kept hyacinths in old blacking bottles; in "Hard Times" Josiah Bounderby brags that the only pictures he possessed when a boy were the illustrated labels "of a man shaving himself in a boot on the

blacking bottles." There are slight references also in "Little Dorrit," in "Great Expectations," in "Our Mutual Friend" and in "Edwin Drood." Yet the special references to this episode in his life should not draw one away from observing the more important use which he made of his memory of his inner life in his study of David Copperfield, and perhaps quite as much in his compassionate picture of Oliver Twist who seems in many respects to have been an exaggerated portrait of the puny, forlorn little Charles Dickens as the successful novelist partly remembered, partly imagined him. It is difficult not to feel a slight impatience at the attitude which Dickens takes toward the whole matter, and especially at the pride with which he surveys his preservation of his social standing, but one is helped to a sympathetic appreciation of the situation by remembering how in Dickens's day more even than now, an Englishman who had aristocratic associations would shrink from revealing his experience in a menial occupation, and also far more by reflecting that Dickens was a sensitive child, easily preyed upon by sentiment, as his writings clearly show, that always he and his feelings were the centre about which the rest of the world revolved, and thus that the apparent neglect by his parents was bloated by his imagination into a monstrous cruelty, a horrible offence against humanity.

In point of fact, the family was at its wit's end, as we have seen, and snatched at any straw which seemed to offer any sort of rescue from shipwreck. But John Dickens's life in prison came to an end, he fell heir to a small estate, he quarrelled with Charles's employer, and so withdrew the boy from his hateful occupation, and the family again setting up their household gods Charles was sent once more to school. "There was a school," he writes, "in the Hampstead Road kept by Mr. Jones, a Welshman, to which my father despatched me to ask for a card of terms. The boys were at dinner, and Mr. Jones was carving for them with a pair of holland sleeves on, when I acquitted myself of this commission. He came out, and gave me what I wanted, and hoped I should become a pupil. I did. At seven o'clock one morning, very soon afterwards, I went as day scholar to Mr. Jones's establishment, which was in Mornington Place, and had its schoolroom sliced away by the Birmingham Railway, when that change came about. The schoolroom, however, was not threatened by

directors or civil engineers then, and there was a board over the door, graced with the words WELLINGTON HOUSE ACADEMY." Here Dickens spent the short remainder of his school life, some two years or so, picking up some knowledge, but not apparently receiving as much inspiration as he found in his earlier Chatham days. In his paper Our School, reproduced in his "Miscellanies" he kept near enough to the actual facts to remind an old schoolfellow at once of the details of Mr. Jones's school, and the lineaments of masters and boys reappear in the Salem House of "David Copperfield."

Perhaps one is not far out of the way who sees in Dickens's first ventures in writing and acting at this time the most fruitful branch of his education. "I think that at that time," writes the schoolfellow already referred to, "Dickens took to writing small tales, and we had a sort of club for lending and circulating them. Dickens was also very strong in using a sort of lingo, which made us quite unintelligible to bystanders. We were very strong, too, in theatricals. We mounted small theatres, and got up very gorgeous scenery to illustrate the Miller and his Men and Cherry and Fair Star. I remember the present Mr. Beverley, the scene-painter, assisted us in this. Dickens was always a leader at these plays, which were occasionally presented with much solemnity before an audience of boys and in the presence of the ushers. My brother, assisted by Dickens, got up the Miller and his Men in a very gorgeous form. Master Beverley constructed the mill for us in such a way that it could tumble to pieces with the assistance of crackers. At one representation the fireworks in the last scene ending with the destruction of the mill were so very real that the police interfered and knocked violently at the doors."

These two years of boyish sport and matter of fact schooling did not obliterate in the boy's mind the traces of the unlovely period of servitude which just preceded, but they gave him a fortunate taste of more healthful occupation and provided him with time for his growing pains.

II

FIRST ESSAYS AT LIFE

For a short time after leaving school Dickens was employed as clerk to Mr. Molloy, a solicitor in New Square, Lincoln's Inn Fields, where was the only one of his school friends, with whom he kept up a friendship, Thomas Mitton. But a more permanent position was found for him presently. In May, 1827, when he was three months over fifteen years, he entered the office of Mr. Edward Blackmore, attorney of Gray's Inn, and remained there until November, 1828. "I was well acquainted," writes Mr. Blackmore, "with his parents, and being then in practice in Gray's Inn, they asked me if I could find employment for him. He was a bright, clever-looking youth, and I took him as a clerk. . . . I have now an account book which he used to keep of petty disbursements in the office, in which he charged himself with the modest salary first of thirteen shillings and sixpence, and afterwards of fifteen shillings a week. Several incidents took place in the office of which he must have been a keen observer, as I recognized some of them in his 'Pickwick' and 'Nickleby,' and I am much mistaken if some of his characters had not their originals in persons I well remember. His taste for theatricals was much promoted by a fellow-clerk named Potter, since dead, with whom he chiefly associated. They took every opportunity, then unknown to me, of going together to a minor theatre, where (I afterwards heard) they not unfrequently engaged in parts. After he left me I saw him at times in the Lord Chancellor's court, taking notes of cases as a reporter."

These eighteen months in an attorney's office bore fruit in the abundant pictures of legal scenes. What with his acquaintance with the lower sort in the debtor's prison and the nearness he had to the more respectable ones in Mr. Blackmore's office, he was equipped with the material for creating Sampson Brass, Solomon Pell, Dodson and Fogg, Kenge and Carboy, Mr.

Lowten, Dick Swiveller, John Wemmick, Mr. Tulkinghorn, Mr. Grewgious, Mr. Perker, Sergeant Buzfuz, and many others. It is to be observed that his early associations could scarcely have been of the best sort, for the profession as a class fares rather hardly at his hands.

The occupation of a lawyer's boy was not very engrossing, and Dickens was of too restless a disposition and had too much consciousness of growing power to content himself with a life which called for little more than perfunctory performance of easy labors. His father had taken to reporting as a means of livelihood and held a position on one of the daily papers. Probably it was this that turned the son's mind in the same direction. At any rate, while still in Mr. Blackmore's office, he set about acquiring the art of shorthand writing from Gurney's Brachygraphy, a book which would strike a modern stenographer as unnecessarily laborious and cumbersome. The reader of "David Copperfield" will recall the struggles of that hero in acquiring the art, and the narrative was but a humorous exaggeration of Dickens's own experience. What is most to the point is the vehement, unrelenting fashion in which he set about the task of qualifying himself for the position of parliamentary reporter. The power of concentration which he showed later in his writing, the faculty for an almost furious abandonment of himself to the task in hand, showed themselves now, and intimate the force of character which lay behind his effort to wrest a living for himself out of the world about him. As the hardship of home had made this imperative, he was stimulated also at this time by an early passion. The Dora of "David Copperfield" was a bit out of his own experience of life, and with the intensity of his nature and all the fervid love of a young man, he threw himself into the business of a reporter, seeing in that way and that way only the opportunity for maintenance and marriage. He left Mr. Blackmore's office, and found employment as a reporter in the Lord Chancellor's Court, at Doctors' Commons, in various Metropolitan Police Courts, and elsewhere. It is interesting to observe as an instance of his eagerness that he attended the British Museum the day after he was eighteen years old, the earliest opportunity he had according to the rules of the library. It was probably to avail himself of the books on shorthand, mainly, but a boy who had of his own free will fallen upon the

books which Dickens read in his childhood might be counted on to read voraciously as soon as he had at his command all literature.

Dickens did not at first secure the steady position which he aimed at, but when he was nineteen he obtained a position as reporter on the "True Sun" and after working on that paper which was short lived, and on the "Mirror of Parliament" became in his twenty-third year a reporter for the important "Morning Chronicle." No one can doubt that the training which he received in this occupation had much to do with his success later. Aside from the discipline of his powers which the close application ensured, every faculty which could play a part in the kind of novel writing which Dickens was to be engaged in was trained by the exercise, — his observation, his memory, his power of catching and preserving salient features, his sense of humor as he was called on in rapid succession to pass in review scenes in all phases of life. He has left very distinct testimony as to the value of this experience. "To the wholesome training of severe newspaper work, when I was a very young man," he once said in a speech to a gathering of journalists, "I constantly refer my first successes;" and what a hold the art thus acquired had on him appears from his confession in another speech. "The pleasure that I used to feel in the rapidity and dexterity of its exercise has never faded out of my breast. Whatever little cunning of hand or head I took to it, or acquired in it, I have so retained as that I fully believe I could resume it to-morrow, very little the worse from long disuse. To this present year (1865) of my life, when I sit in this hall, or where not, hearing a dull speech (the phenomenon does occur), I sometimes beguile the tedium of the moment by mentally following the speaker in the old, old way; and sometimes, if you can believe me, I even find my hand going on the tablecloth, taking an imaginary note of it all."[1]

If Dickens displayed his cordial dislike of the legal profession by introducing its members for the most part as unlovely characters in his novels, he showed in like manner his affection for the stage by reproducing the humbler members of the theatrical profession in amusing but never spiteful caricature.

[1] The whole speech is an interesting summary of Dickens's experience as a reporter. It will be found in Vol. ii. p. 455.

We have already seen that he frequented the theatre early, and we shall have occasion later on to note the enthusiasm with which he made the stage almost an avocation. It is not strange, therefore, to learn that at this time, when he had parted company with law, and had turned to reporting for maintenance, he seriously contemplated taking up the actor's profession. He had taken minor parts in some of the humbler theatres, and went so far as to present himself at the doors of Covent Garden, seeking an engagement. The apparently trivial accident of illness at the time interfered with an interview with the manager, and nothing came of his resolution. Of course there would have been nothing irrevocable about such an engagement, and his actual experience on the stage might have been short, but when we consider his aptitude for acting and the vehemence with which he carried through any design he had entertained, it is quite within bounds to believe that he might have been a melodramatic actor, achieving a great success on the stage, and amusing himself at last with a droll autobiography.

His real vocation, however, was not long in disclosing itself to him. He had been two years in the service of the newspapers as parliamentary reporter, and was twenty-one years old when he took the natural step of offering a contribution to one of the magazines. It was quite impossible for one who had been reporting, not merely verbatim, but especially in the police courts had been required to condense and reproduce matter in his own form, and who had amused himself and his friends with such performances as a travesty of Othello, not to make such a venture as a caricaturist sketch in the "Monthly Magazine." The sketch was A Dinner at Poplar Walk, re-named afterward Mr. Minns and his Cousin, and it appeared in the number for December, 1833. It was printed without a signature and was followed by four more sketches in the early months of 1834. Then in August, 1834, with a growing sense, doubtless, of their popularity and a consciousness of his own personal power, he signed a paper with the rather meaningless name Boz, a signature as he later explained which had a family significance only, being short for Boses, a nasal form of Moses. Two or three more papers appeared in the "Monthly" of similar character; they were rudely comic sketches of imaginary life, not without genuine fun and not without also the

marks of vigorous portraiture. He had his hand in now, but the "Monthly Magazine" could not keep up with his active-mindedness, and besides it had no funds with which to pay for the sketches. He sought a more convenient medium and found it easily at hand. The "Morning Chronicle," upon which he was engaged as reporter, proposed an evening edition, and the manager, Mr. George Hogarth, who already knew Dickens and was aware of his work, asked him to write a sketch for the first number. Here was the opening, and Dickens at once caught at it, and with his lively sense of the chance offered proposed a series of sketches and a consequent increase of his weekly salary from five to seven guineas. The offer was accepted; fortunately the editor of the paper, Mr. Black, was a man who had a hearty love of fun, and the young writer was at once given the cordial encouragement which means more from the editor who accepts than from the public who read.

Thus throughout the year 1835 Dickens carried on the double occupation of reporter for the "Morning Chronicle," and writer of light sketches for the "Evening Chronicle." It may be because he was writing for a newspaper and not a magazine, because, too, he wished to have some sort of unity in a series appearing weekly, that the "Sketches by Boz" which now appeared were more distinctly based on actual life, were less imaginary than the earlier ones. Already he was showing that eager interest in the scenes and people that fell under his eye in the thronged London about him, which was to deepen into a passion, sending him out on long walks by night and day through the streets of the great city. As a result these "Sketches," rightly so named, are the preliminary studies which have a value not only in themselves, but were a preparation for the more elaborate pictures of later days.

Besides furnishing these sketches in the "Evening Chronicle," Dickens carried forward in the latter part of 1835 a new series of "Scenes and Characters," signed Tibbs in "Bell's Life in London and Sporting Chronicle." Early in 1836, he collected from these several sources enough to make his first published work, "Sketches by Boz, illustrative of Every Day Life and Every Day People," illustrated by Cruikshank, and in a two volume form. He carried forward the same serial publication, though less frequently in 1836, and before the end of the year made a similar collection which was published as the second series of "Sketches by Boz."

III

"PICKWICK"

THE vein laid open in the "Sketches" had not been worked out; it had developed a richer deposit, and the year 1836 besides seeing Dickens's first book is to be remembered as the year of the beginning of "Pickwick," and thus of that great rush into fame which is unexampled in modern literature, unless we count "Uncle Tom's Cabin" as an equal instance. In 1835 Dickens had become engaged to Miss Catherine Hogarth, the eldest daughter of Mr. George Hogarth, who had prompted the series of sketches in the "Evening Chronicle." It must have been close on to the end of the year that Dickens wrote the following loosely dated letter to Miss Hogarth: —

FURNIVAL'S INN, Wednesday Evening, 1835.

MY DEAREST KATE, — The House is up; but I am very sorry to say that I must stay at home. I have had a visit from the publishers this morning, and the story cannot be any longer delayed; it must be done to-morrow, as there are more important considerations than the mere payment for the story involved too. I must exercise a little self-denial and set to work.

They (Chapman and Hall) have made me an offer of fourteen pounds a month, to write and edit a new publication they contemplate, entirely by myself, to be published monthly, and each number to contain four woodcuts. I am to make my estimate and calculation, and to give them a decisive answer on Friday morning. The work will be no joke, but the emolument is too tempting to resist.

Dickens was living thus at this time in chambers; he was still reporting for the "Chronicle," and quite possibly counting on his regular income from this source as justification for his approaching marriage. He was contributing sketches to the

"Evening Chronicle," and he had been engaged on the strength of these sketches to write for the "Library of Fiction," a new venture by a young firm of publishers. The story promised them and referred to in this letter was probably The Tuggs's at Ramsgate which was illustrated with two designs by Seymour, or it may be that Chapman and Hall already had this story, and that the sketch afterward collected in "Sketches by Boz" and there entitled The First of May was the one which could no longer be delayed. Be this as it may, "the new publication" to be written entirely by himself was the work which took shape as "The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club." The story is fully told in the Introduction to that volume, in this series, of the circumstances attending its inception, and one can readily trace the history of a work which, begun somewhat aimlessly, owed much of its success to the freedom which its loose construction allowed to the play of fancy, the spontaneous humor, and the inventive faculty of its author. The very form of serial publication was in a way of help to Dickens since it enabled him to work by spurts as it were, and to keep so close to his audience that each quick response from them stimulated him to greater gayety, and gave him the keen sense of seeing fame rising with every successive part.

The first number of "Pickwick" was published March 31, 1836, and two days later Dickens was married to Miss Hogarth and went to spend the honeymoon at the little village of Chalk, on the road between Gravesend and Rochester. A most auspicious beginning of his married life surely, and not the less that in the Hogarth family Dickens had his dearest friends. Two sisters of his wife became the closest of friends to him. One, Mary Hogarth, died at the age of seventeen, when Dickens was engrossed with "Pickwick," and so overcome was he with grief, that he was forced to interrupt his work and suffer two months to pass without a number. For her epitaph he wrote: "Young, beautiful, and good, God in his mercy numbered her among his angels at the early age of seventeen." The phrase seems to have lingered in his mind as a mournful refrain, expressive of a fine ideal. In "Oliver Twist," Rose Maylie is "the young, the beautiful, and good"; Little Nell in "The Old Curiosity Shop" again is characterized at her death as "so young, so beautiful, so good," and in "Dombey and Son," Walter Gay, speaking of Florence Dombey, says: "To think that she so young, so good and beautiful."

Dickens's letters, at the time of Mary Hogarth's death, especially those to her mother, give evidence of the strong hold which the girl had upon his affection and his imagination. She seems in a measure to have been blended in his mind with her sister Georgina who made one of his household, and of whom much will be heard in his letters, especially at the crisis of his domestic infelicity. Six years after Mary's death, we find him writing to Mrs. Hogarth: "I trace in many respects a strong resemblance between her mental features and Georgina's — so strange a one, at times, that when she and Kate and I are sitting together, I seem to think that what has happened is a melancholy dream from which I am just awakening. The perfect like of what she was, will never be again, but so much of her spirit shines out in this sister that the old time comes back again at some seasons, and I can hardly separate it from the present."

Barring this sad incident, Dickens's life during the writing and issue of "Pickwick," which went on together, was one of exhilaration and an expansion of power, seeking an outlet through his serial and overflowing into various other channels. "Pickwick" was begun as we have said in April, 1836, and finished in November, 1837. During that time he was winding up his "Sketches by Boz," and bringing out the second series in a volume. He was experimenting also in dramatic composition of a light order. He took one of his published sketches, "The Great Winglebury Duel," and built upon it a farcical comedy, "The Strange Gentleman," which was performed at St. James's Theatre under Braham's management in the fall of 1836. This was followed a couple of months later by "The Village Coquettes," a comic opera in two acts, the music by John Hullah, one of the acquaintances he appears to have formed through his sister Fanny, whose musical accomplishments had enabled her to keep step for a time with her brother. He put more serious thought into a small volume entitled "Sunday under Three Heads," which was a pamphlet for the times, called out by a bill "for the better observance of the Sabbath," which had been presented by Sir Andrew Agnew in the House of Commons, but thrown out. Dickens drew pictures in more restrained diction than was customary with him, of London on Sunday, and of scenes of more cheerful nature which he had seen in the west of England. The pamphlet

was a protest against strict Sabbatarianism and a plea for the opening of the British Museum and other public institutions on Sunday. The pamphlet did not bear his name.

It is not unlikely that the suggestion of this piece of writing came to Dickens as he sat as reporter in the House of Commons, but it had become clear to him by this time that he had found his true vocation, and with the session of 1836 his occupation as reporter ceased. One more comic burletta, "Is She his Wife? or Something Singular," was performed at St. James's Theatre in March, 1837, and published that same year.

IV

MANY IRONS IN THE FIRE

THE record of Dickens's life at this time is one of abnormal activity. We get some glimpses of his domestic life, as he flits to Chalk in February, 1837, a month after the birth of his eldest boy, Charles Dickens, Jr., and back to a new home in Doughty Street, on a ten days' jaunt with his wife in the summer to Belgium, back to Broadstairs and then to Brighton, both favorite resorts of his. He rode much in those days and took long walks by night as well as by day, stimulated into feverish life by his discovery of his power and his success in "Pickwick." But the most significant mark of his energy was the proud willingness which he showed to meet the demands which came hurriedly upon him from publishers, and the bravery with which he made engagements which would appall most literary workers, assured that he could do whatever he chose. When the sixth number of "Pickwick" appeared at the end of August, 1836, Dickens had made an agreement with Mr. Bentley to undertake the editorship of a new magazine to be called "Bentley's Miscellany," to begin with the coming new year, to which he was to contribute not only his next novel, "Oliver Twist," but other papers and sketches. Soon he was making still further engagements with the same publisher, and as the result of this new connection he was not only during 1835, and the first of 1836, finishing "Pickwick" for Chapman and Hall, and *pari passu* carrying on "Oliver Twist" in "Bentley's Miscellany," but writing those farcical satires now collected under the title of "The Mudfog Papers," and beginning a series of "Stray Chapters by Boz," both appearing in "Bentley." Moreover he undertook to edit the "Memoirs of Joseph Grimaldi" for Bentley, and he wrote the two volumes of somewhat forced character sketching for Chapman and Hall, entitled "Sketches of Young Gentlemen" and "Sketches of Young Couples." A farce, "The Lamplighter," was written for

Macready, but never acted, and privately printed in 1838. When it is added that "Nicholas Nickleby" was begun in April, 1838, for monthly issue, it will be seen how crowded with work were the years 1837, 1838, and it is scarcely to be wondered at that the promise he had made for still another novel, "Barnaby Rudge," to follow "Oliver Twist," began to haunt him like a nightmare, and, inasmuch as the printer was always at his heels for copy for "Nicholas Nickleby," that he finally fretted himself, his adviser Forster, and his publishers into a new bargain, by which he closed his agreement with Bentley, and transferred all his publishing interest to Chapman and Hall. The story of his pecuniary engagements at this time is told in full in the Introductions to the several novels concerned, and does not place Dickens in an altogether agreeable light, though it illustrates well his belief in himself and a certain imperious insistence on a similar recognition from others. In the midst of this rush of life, what was Dickens in his own consciousness? This is what one is most eager to discover after he has learned the external history of a man. Dickens's letters at this period, as indeed always, give but few disclosures of his deeper feelings, but there is a scrap of a diary, which he kept up for a fortnight and then suddenly abandoned, which is worth citing, almost in full, because of the few hints it gives of his inner life.

"*Monday*, 1 *January*, 1838.

"A sad New Year's Day in one respect, for at the opening of last year poor Mary was with us. Very many things to be grateful for since then, however. Increased reputation and means — good health and prospects. We never know the full value of blessings till we lose them (we were not ignorant of this one when we had it, I hope). But if she were with us now, the same winning, happy, amiable companion, sympathizing with all my thoughts and feelings more than any one I knew ever did or will, I think I should have nothing to wish for, but a continuance of such happiness. But she is gone, and pray God I may one day, through His mercy, rejoin her. I wrote to Mrs. Hogarth yesterday, taking advantage of the opportunity afforded me by her sending, as a New Year's token, a pen-wiper of poor Mary's, imploring her as strongly as I could to think of the many remaining claims upon her affection and exertions, and not to give way to unavailing grief.

... night, and she seems hurt at my doing so, ... all useful respects she is the same as ever. ... best, and still hope I did right.

"... *January*, 1838.

... boy's birthday — one year old. A few people at night ... Procter, the De Gex's, John Ross, Mitton, and the ... besides our families — to twelfth-cake and forfeits.

"This day last year, Mary and I wandered up and down Holborn and the streets about for hours, looking after a little table for Kate's bedroom, which we bought at last at the very first broker's which we had looked into, and which we had passed half a dozen times because *I did n't like* to ask the price. I took her out to Brompton at night, as we had no place for her to sleep in (the two mothers being with us); she came back again next day to keep house for me, and stopped nearly the rest of the month. I shall never be so happy again as in those chambers three stories high — never if I roll in wealth and fame. I would hire them to keep empty, if I could afford it.

"*Tuesday*, 9 *January*, 1838.

"Went to the Sun office to insure my life, where the Board seemed disposed to think I work too much. Made Forster and Pickthorn, my doctor, the references — and after an interesting interview with the Board and the Board's doctor, came away to work again.

"*Sunday*, 14 *January*, 1838.

"To church in the morning, and when I came home I wrote the preceding portion of this diary, which henceforth I make a steadfast resolution not to neglect, or *paint*. I have not done it yet, nor will I; but say what rises to my lips — my mental lips at least — without reserve. No other eyes will see it, while mine are open in life, and although I dare say I shall be ashamed of a good deal in it, I should like to look over it at the year's end.

"In Scott's diary, which I have been looking at this morning, there are thoughts which have been mine by day and by night, in good spirits and bad, since Mary died.

"Another day, and a bright one to the external world, again opens on us; the air soft, and the flowers smiling, and the leaves glittering. They cannot refresh her to whom mild weather was a natural enjoyment. . . . She is sentient and

conscious of my emotions *somewhere* — where, we cannot tell, how, we cannot tell; yet would I not at this moment renounce the mysterious yet certain hope that I shall see her in a better world, for all that this world can give me. . . .

"I know but too well how true all this is.

"*Monday*, 15 *January*, 1838.

"Here ends this brief attempt at a diary. I grow sad over this checking off of days, and can't do it."

It was, after all, in his books that Dickens lived most abundantly, and into them he poured his sentiment, in them he dwelt upon his own personal experience, and it may be added that in them he not only set down what he saw about him but incorporated his friends; yet whether in books or in letters or diary, there is a vivid expression of the affection which he felt for others as *his* possession. His friends first, and the rest of the world afterward, belonged to him. Such a view, however, by no means excludes the notion of generosity or steadfastness, and Dickens's letters give abundant testimony to the heartiness of his friendly association.

The high spirits and incessant activity of these days found expression not only in walks and drives, but in many forms of athletic exercise. "Bar-leaping, bowling, and quoits," says Forster, "were among the games carried on with the greatest ardor; and in sustained energy, what is called keeping it up, Dickens certainly distanced every competitor. Even the lighter recreations of battle-door and bagatelle were pursued with relentless activity; and at such amusements as the Petersham races, in those days rather celebrated, and which he visited daily while they lasted, he worked much harder himself than the running horses did."

Although the settlement of his affairs with Bentley included retirement from the editorship of "Bentley's Miscellany," Dickens could not dismiss the notion, which fascinated Scott and has been an *ignis-fatuus* of many authors since, that if he had a hand in the publishing of literature he would secure more of the profits which he felt were enjoyed by publishers in consequence of his creativeness, and so as "Nicholas Nickleby" drew near its close in the latter part of the year 1839, he held many conferences with Forster, looking to some way in which he could secure a certain freedom of production combined with regularity of issue and consequent liberal returns. Dickens

had a sharp turn for business, and with his demonstrated capacity for producing books he was in a position to make the most of his literary capital. If he had been bent only on fortune-making, he could have made a greater success of the new venture, "Master Humphrey's Clock," but fortunately Dickens was primarily an artist in literature, and when that side of his nature came into full play all else was forgotten in the zeal of creation. All the elaborate plans with which, in somewhat headstrong fashion, he launched a new periodical of which he was to be editor, chief contributor, and largely proprietor, were dissipated as he became interested in the story of "The Old Curiosity Shop," and though with an effort at consistency he returned to the scheme from time to time, while he was writing both that story and "Barnaby Rudge," the fringe of these important tales soon fell away, leaving the pieces whole and self-sufficient. Most of the failures of great artists may be traced to the intrusion of a hostile impulse, and this hostile impulse is more apt to be greed than anything else. It was a disturbing element in Dickens's case, and the most signal exhibition was in this scheme which resulted, as we have said, in two notable tales, and a considerable body of accompanying matter which interests the curious only.

The spread of his fame was steady, and with it there was a delightful enlargement of his personal friendship. The artist who entered cordially into the plans for "Master Humphrey's Clock," Mr. George Cattermole, Macready, Harness, the Countess of Blessington, Washington Irving, Monckton Milnes, Ainsworth who succeeded him in the charge of "Bentley's Miscellany," Maclise the painter, — these are some of the new correspondents to whom he wrote with an abandon which indicated the freedom and warmth of his social life. Carlyle in a letter to his brother John, dated March 17, 1840, has drawn the portrait of Dickens as he met him at that time in society.

"Clear blue, intelligent eyes, eyebrows that he arches amazingly, large, protrusive, rather loose mouth, a face of most extreme mobility, which he shuffles about — eyebrows, eyes, mouth and all — in a very singular manner while speaking. Surmount this with a loose coil of common-colored hair, and set it on a small, compact figure, very small and dressed a la D'Orsay rather than well — this is Pickwick. For the rest a quiet, shrewd-looking little fellow who seems to guess pretty well what he is and what others are."

V

FIRST VISIT TO AMERICA

WHEN Dickens was projecting "Master Humphrey's Clock," he had in mind not only stories but sketches of travel. He thought he might go to Ireland, or to America, and write home descriptions of what he saw. The scheme of the miscellany was modified as we have seen, but the notion of travel and descriptive notes retained its charm for his restless nature. He had begun to form personal friendships with Americans, he knew that his books were widely read there, and the reports of travellers interested him. The great flood of emigration from Ireland had indeed scarcely risen, but America was looming up very large in the horizon, and Dickens had the reporter instinct. The Macreadys kindly took charge of the children of the family, and on the 4th of January, 1842, Dickens and his wife, accompanied by a maid, set out on a Cunard steamship for Boston.

"American Notes" gives in detail the course of his journey. In 1842 river steamboats played relatively a more important part in inland travel than now, and even canals were regarded as an advance on the former rough road travel. The route taken was more formidable, so far as comfort goes, than the traveller to-day can realize easily. As far south he went as Richmond, as far west as St. Louis, and he spent such time as he was not journeying in the few chief centres of the time, Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Washington, Baltimore, Richmond, Cincinnati, St. Louis, Buffalo. He was at home again in June.

The impressions which the United States made upon him are recorded so freely, both in "American Notes" and in his published letters, that it is an easy matter to realize them. With the reporter instinct, Dickens had also the too common reliance of the reporter on the momentary sight, and he had that unlicensed humor which could be riotous on occasion. It is a commonplace that the English traveller in America has

rarely succeeded in depolarizing his thought, and Dickens was different from other uninstructed English travellers, chiefly in his failure not only to get away from his country but to get away from himself. Theoretically he held democratic views, and was more in sympathy with the underlying principles of American liberty than most Englishmen, and in England was a bitter opponent of the Tory party; practically, he was despotic and arrogant, setting up his private judgment as the standard, and quite incapable of penetrating the outward show. A witty woman in a new, impatient city on our western border, when receiving Mrs. President Cleveland on her visit to the place, apologized for the condition of things, saying, "You really must excuse us, but we have just moved in." Dickens, with his abnormally quick eye, and his keen sense of the incongruous, swiftly took in the crudity, the bumptiousness, the insolence, the ill-manners of a people awkwardly conscious of undeveloped power, and was irritated when he was not amused. He felt moreover, and not unnaturally, the personal wrong done him in the absence of an international copyright law; his sense of justice was confounded with his sense of individual loss, and he came away to the customary comfort and well regulated domesticity of England, with a sort of angry impatience at the contradictions of America, an impatience which found expression later in a satire that was none the less bitter that it was based on half truths. Wherever he went he instituted comparisons, and these comparisons became almost invariably contrasts, until in the aggregate there seemed to be but one general effect of disagreeableness on the American side.

Nevertheless he added distinctly to his stock of personal friendships as his letters after his return showed, and though he failed in anything like a true assessment of the new country, his humorous delineation of superficial aspects was so quick and entertaining that those who began to scold at his diatribes ended by laughing good naturedly over the American variations of that grotesque world peopled by the creations of Dickens. He recorded his impressions in two books, "American Notes" and "Martin Chuzzlewit," where the American episode, not needed by the exigencies of the story, was requisite to allow Dickens to discharge himself of the accumulation of humorous bile.

The two years which followed

ica were occupied, so far as writing is concerned, mainly with the two books just named, and with "A Christmas Carol," the first of that series of Christmas books which expressed in condensed form the ruling emotion of Dickens's mind, a highly charged humanitarianism that sought a solvent for all problems in what may be called the spirit of good nature. He was in the full tide of productive energy, and knew no abatement of power. When he went to America he was but thirty years of age, yet already was the best known writer of English fiction of the day, and the reception he had there, in spite of all the disagreeable concomitants, was so hearty, so universal, that his own consciousness of power must have been heightened by this external evidence. The American visit made but a trifling break in his life, and in no important sense constituted an era in it. He returned to his friends, entertained Longfellow, made an excursion with Forster, Stanfield, and Maclise to Cornwall, and entered heartily and hopefully upon his new novel, and yet, account for it though he could not, a chill struck his fame, and the public refused to respond to the invitation held out by "Martin Chuzzlewit" with anything like the ardor which had previously possessed his great circle of readers. From a height of seventy thousand for numbers of earlier books the circulation dropped nearly to twenty thousand, nor did "A Christmas Carol," though its popularity was marked, yield the return which he anticipated.

To one with so mercurial and sensitive a temperament as Dickens, this apparent diminution of success was little short of appalling. Added to this was the complication which his bargain with Chapman and Hall introduced into his affairs. These publishers, when contracting through their attorneys with Forster, on behalf of Dickens, for the publication of "Martin Chuzzlewit," had stipulated that, in event of its profits proving inadequate to reimburse them for the advance they made at the outset, they should reserve a portion of the amount due the author as the several numbers appeared. Mr. Forster remarks respecting the clause: "I knew too much of the antecedent relations of the parties to regard it as other than a mere form to satisfy the attorneys in the case." That is, he apparently assumed that a clause in the contract intended for the protection of the publishers who were making a business investment would be ignored by them should they begin to lose, and

he gently reproaches one of the members of the firm for inconsiderately dropping a word to remind Dickens of the clause. The inconsiderateness was in overlooking the temperament of Dickens, which led him at once to take umbrage and to become fixed in his resolution to close his arrangements with a publishing house that had heretofore shown itself a faithful business ally. It is worth while to go back to the date of Dickens's departure for America, to read what he then wrote to Messrs. Chapman and Hall.

"Having disposed," he says, "of the business part of this letter, I should not feel at ease on leaving England if I did not tell you once more with my whole heart that your conduct to me on this and all other occasions has been honorable, manly, and generous, and that I have felt it a solemn duty, in the event of any accident happening to me while I am away, to place this testimony upon record. It forms part of a will I have made for the security of my children; for I wish them to know it when they are capable of understanding your worth and my appreciation of it." In fifteen years he was to return to these publishers, but now he broke with them, and entered into engagements with Messrs. Bradbury and Evans, who were at the time his printers and now became also his publishers.

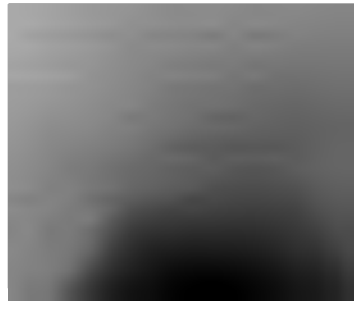
It is pleasant to turn from Dickens reading contracts by the dim light of his own interest, to Dickens giving himself heartily to a generous help of other people. He was greatly interested in a somewhat bold play by Mr. Westland Marston, called "The Patrician's Daughter," and eagerly offered his friend a Prologue to introduce it. He wrote also a Preface to "Evenings with a Working Man" by John Overs, in which he not only did his best to give the book a good word but delicately narrated his continued kindness to its author. He sought out his old editorial friend, John Black, of the "Chronicle," who was in trouble, and arranged for him a dinner at which he summoned some notable men of the day for the cheer and encouragement of the poor fellow. He set on foot a movement to secure ample provision for the support of the children of Elton the actor, who lost his life in an accident. He threw himself ardently into the cause of education, especially the education of the very poor. "I sent Miss Coutts," he wrote September 24, 1843, "a sledge-hammer account of the Ragged Schools; and as I saw her name for two hundred pounds in the clergy

education subscription-list, took pains to show her that religious mysteries and difficult creeds would n't do for such pupils. I told her, too, that it was of immense importance they should be *washed*. She writes back to know what the rent of some large, airy premises would be, and what the expense of erecting a regular bathing or purifying place; touching which points I am in correspondence with the authorities." He wrote to the editor of the "Edinburgh Review," desirous of making the whole subject forcibly clear to the English people.

There was one element in Dickens's nature which was deep rooted and very significant of his keen sense of honor. Perhaps no one of his sayings has passed into such current use or has left so strong an impression on the public as that which he attributes to Mr. Micawber. "Annual income, twenty pounds; annual expenditure, nineteen nineteen six, — result, happiness. Annual income, twenty pounds; annual expenditure, twenty pounds nought and six, — result, misery." His recollection of his own boyhood when a sanguine father brought the family into a hopeless condition of debt doubtless intensified his horror of living beyond his income. The disappointment, therefore, which he felt over the falling off of interest in "Martin Chuzzlewit," as well as the comparatively unsatisfactory returns from "A Christmas Carol," had a more serious meaning to him than a mere attack on his pride of authorship. "Beyond his own domestic expenses necessarily increasing," says his biographer Forster, "there were many, never satisfied, constantly recurring claims from family quarters, not the more easily avoidable because unreasonable and unjust." He confronted these heavy drains upon his purse, looked the situation squarely in the face, and, though no less confident of his productive powers, determined resolutely to increase his income by lessening his expenses. "I am convinced," he wrote to Forster, November 2, 1843, "that my expenses abroad would not be more than half of my expenses here; the influence of change and nature upon me, enormous. You know, as well as I, that I think 'Chuzzlewit' in a hundred points immeasurably the best of my stories. That I feel my power now more than I ever did. That I have a greater confidence in myself than I ever had. That I *know*, if I have health, I could sustain any place in the minds of thinking men, though

fifty writers started up to-morrow. But how many readers do *not* think! How many take it upon trust from knaves and idiots, that one writes too fast, or runs a thing to death! . . . If I wrote for forty thousand Forsters, or for forty thousand people who know I write because I can't help it, I should have no need to leave the scene. But this very book warns me that if I *can* leave it for a time I had better do so and must do so. . . . What would poor Scott have given to have gone abroad, of his own free will, a young man, instead of creeping there, a driveller, in his miserable decay! . . . And as a matter of trade between me and the public, should I not be better off a year hence, with the reputation of having seen so much in the mean time? The reason which induces you to look upon this scheme with dislike — separation for so long a time — surely has equal weight with me. I see very little pleasure in it, beyond the natural desire to have been in those great scenes; I anticipate no enjoyment at the time. I have come to look upon it as a matter of policy and duty."

Once Dickens had made up his mind to any course of action, he was impatient until he had carried his resolution into effect. By the end of May, 1844, he had let his house in Devonshire Terrace, and on the last day of June he set out with his family for Italy.



VI

ITALY, SWITZERLAND, AND PARIS

For the next three years nearly, Dickens persevered in his experiment of living abroad with his family, returning to England for brief periods, and letting his house meanwhile. During the first summer and early fall he occupied a villa first at Albaro near Genoa, and afterward the Palazzo Peschiere in Genoa itself. He applied himself diligently to learning the Italian language, and, delivering no letters of introduction, he kept himself reasonably free from interruption. It was not till near the end of the year, however, that he found himself able to write a new Christmas story, as he had designed. His mind of late had been more than usually disturbed by a contemplation of the condition of the London poor. His long walks by day and night had made him well acquainted with external conditions, but probably it was his attentive listening to the message of Carlyle that pressed the matter home, and now with the advantage which distance from the scene gave him he essayed to embody in his story "The Chimes" something of his feeling and thought. "I like more and more," he wrote to Forster, "my notion of making, in this little book, a great blow for the poor. Something powerful, I think I can do, but I want to be tender, too, and cheerful. . . . If my design be anything at all, it has a grip upon the very throat of the time." He was in this mood when he entered upon the story, and he fed upon the theme, growing more passionately in earnest as he proceeded, so that the book was as much a *concio ad populum* in his mind as it was a work of art.

When it was done he could not resist the strong temptation to run away from Italy to London, not to look after the book in its preliminary stages, for that he could intrust to his confidential friend Forster, but to be there when it was ready for publication, and above all to share it with a few friends; for in his eager interest in his own work, his strong sense of com-

rudery always made him take his friends into his confidence. He wanted to try its effect on a sympathetic audience, and so at the end of November he was in London, and on Monday evening, the second of December, a small company of his friends met at Forster's house to hear Dickens read "The Chimes." Maclise has reproduced the scene in a clever, slightly caricatured sketch, and thus one is able to see the attentive faces of Carlyle, Laman Blanchard, Douglas Jerrold, Forster, Maclise, Clarkson Stanfield, and W. J. Fox. Dickens, wrought up by his reading, is very clearly set forth, and for illustrations of the effect one has only to look at the rapt, awed faces of Dyce and Harness. Of Frederick Dickens, brother of the novelist, one is vouchsafed only the back. The gathering has a further interest since it may well have been the seed from which sprang the notable readings of his writings by Dickens in after years. There can be no doubt of the intensity with which he engaged in this little performance. It was a wintry storm in which he had arrived in England, and Forster, writing to him afterward, expressed his sympathy with him for all the trouble he had been at. "I would not recall an inch of the way to or from you," Dickens replied, "if it had been twenty times as long and twenty thousand times as wintry. It was worth any travel anything. With the end of the road in the very grain of my cheeks, I swear I wouldn't have missed that week, that first night of our meeting, that one evening of the reading at your rooms for any easily stated or conceived consideration."

On his return to Italy Dickens gave himself up more freely to travel and took a genuine holiday, not troubling himself with any writing beyond his frequent letters. In the middle of the summer he was again in England with his family, and remained there during the rest of the year 1845 and the early months of 1846. The reason for this temporary change of plans lay in the carrying out of a scheme in which, with Forster and other friends, he became involved, nothing less than the establishment in London of the "Daily News." Into this scheme Dickens threw himself with great zest, and it was intended that he should be the editor. The prospectus, indeed, appears to have been written either wholly or in the main by him. A few sentences from it will indicate the impulse which set it on foot:—

FOX
T. DICKENS
MACLISE
STANFIELD
HARNESS
BLANCHARD
JERROLD
FORSTER

"We seek, so far as in us lies, to elevate the character of the Public Press in England. We believe it would attain a much higher position, and that those who wield its powers would be infinitely more respected as a class, and an important one, if it were purged of a disposition to sordid attacks upon itself, which only prevails in England and America. . . . Entering on this adventure of a new daily journal in a spirit of honorable competition and hope of public usefulness, we seek, in our new station, at once to preserve our self-respect, and to be respected, for ourselves and for it, by our readers."

Dickens and his associates were greatly discontented with the tone of the public press, which was either virulently partisan or controlled by strong commercial and class interests. They were radicals who especially saw in the approaching culmination of the warfare waged by Cobden and the other anti-corn law league, the triumph of principles of freedom and progress; and they were keenly alive to the significance of those movements which sought more general education, better sanitary laws, and whatever made for the welfare of the poor. Dickens, in his own fashion, had given expression to his sentiment in "The Chimes." He had also within a short time written some political squibs in verse, and in association with his friends, as his letters show, was very much alive to the agitation of questions of reform. He had what may be called a hankering after the conduct of journals as we have had opportunity to see, and only recently he had been projecting a weekly journal to be called "The Cricket," but he had no training and no experience which would qualify him for the management of a political journal.

The first number of this newspaper appeared January 21, 1846, and as early as February 9, Dickens had resigned his editorship; so quickly did he discover how entirely he was out of his element. In the first few weeks of the year, however, he contributed several papers to the journal, including three letters on capital punishment, and he began the publication of "Travelling Letters, written on the Road," which later were issued in book form under the title "Pictures from Italy," and in the preface to the volume he spoke of "a brief mistake he had made, not long ago, in disturbing the old relations between himself and his readers, and departing for a moment from his old pursuits."

Released from this entanglement, Dickens resumed his plan of life and betook himself with his family to Switzerland. He remained in Lausanne until November. There he wrote the fourth of his Christmas Books, "The Battle of Life," and began his next novel, "Dombey and Son," the publication of which in monthly parts was begun in October, 1846, and ended in April, 1848. He found at Lausanne an agreeable colony of English-speaking people, the central figure of which was Mr. Haldimand, formerly a member of Parliament and brother to Mrs. Marcet, who had made a name for herself by her books for the young. He had about him a growing family of children, two daughters and four sons, the oldest nine years old, the youngest a year old, and they with his wife and her sister made a full household. He made, at this time, a simple narrative for his children of the life of our Lord as contained in the four gospels, a labor of love which his children cherished, preserving it as their father would have them, for a personal and sacred use.

During his stay in Switzerland Dickens made many excursions among the mountains and formed a strong liking for the Swiss people. He used the material thus gained in some of his sketches and stories, but never made the country the scene of any notable tale. Indeed it is easy to see how inevitably he gravitated toward cities and concourses of people when he was engaged in constructing his greater works. No doubt the stimulus which came to him from walking the streets had something to do with it. He wrote to Forster when he was busy at Lausanne with the "Battle of Life" and "Dombey:" "The absence of any accessible streets continues to worry me, now that I have so much to do, in a most singular manner. It is quite a little mental phenomenon. I should not walk in them in the daytime, if they were here, I dare say; but at night I want them beyond description."

He took his fill of this kind of enjoyment as soon as the family reached Paris on the 20th of November, 1846. There they remained three months, Dickens working steadily on "Dombey and Son," the publication of which began in October. A glimpse is had of his method when carrying on the composition of a serial novel just in advance of its publication in the statement made to a would-be visitor that Mr. Dickens never allowed himself to receive any one during the

first two weeks of a month. The return of the family to England was hastened by the approaching birth of a fifth son, and also, by the sudden sickness of the eldest son who was at King's College, where he was receiving an education at the charge of the ever-generous Miss Coutts, one of Dickens's steadfast friends. The boy was very ill of scarlet fever, and though there was no other parallel in the circumstances other than the most superficial, one is tempted to guess that in the conception of the tale of "Dombey and Son," Dickens drew upon his own secret ambition for a successor in his son, and that the dangerous illness of the boy supplied him with a power to draw upon his own experience of what might be for the delineation of what was in the death of Paul Dombey.

VII

THE CULMINATION

THE spring of 1847 thus saw the end of Dickens's experiment of economy and recuperation in a continental sojourn. After this he made his home in England, though it was eight years before he established himself in the Rochester home which was to be so intimately associated with his name. He took another in Regent's Park, for it is to be observed that with all his restlessness Dickens had a strong sense of home, and ordered his life with a distinct purpose to have his household about him, if possible, and he carried out that regular scheme of days when at work which is not so readily secured outside of one's own castle. He had also favorite resorts like Brighton and Broadstairs to which he had recourse at certain seasons of the year, and where he made himself very much at home.

The success of "Dombey" had restored his equanimity, and he was now in the heyday of prosperity and full of gayety. The friends with whom he consorted were chiefly men of letters, artists, and actors, and like himself possessed of active spirits. Dickens had more than once shown himself very clever in amateur theatricals, and in the summer of 1847 he and his friends determined to play Ben Jonson's "Every Man in his Humor," together with a farce or two at Manchester and Liverpool, for the benefit of Leigh Hunt. Dickens took the part of Captain Bobadil, and was besides the manager of the company, which contained among others, John Forster, the artists Leech, Cruikshank, Egg, and Stone; Mark Lemon the editor of "Punch;" and Douglas Jerrold, Dudley Costello, and George Henry Lewes. Similar entertainments were carried out for the benefit of James Knowles, in which Shakespeare's "Merry Wives of Windsor" was played, with Dickens as Justice Shallow and Mark Lemon as Falstaff. These and her performances, in the interest of unsuccessful authors and

actors, led eventually to the foundation of the "Guild of Literature and Art," Sir Edward Lytton taking a prominent part in the movement and the Duke of Devonshire lending his aid generously. In support of this benevolent institution plays were written and these and old plays acted, Dickens being the heart and soul and mouthpiece of the whole.

"Never in the world of theatres," says Mr. R. H. Horne, "was a better manager than Charles Dickens. Without, of course, questioning the superiority of Goethe (in the Weimar theatre) as a manager in all matters of high-class dramatic literature, one cannot think he could have been so excellent in all general requirements, stage effects, and practical details of acting and of theatrical business. Equally assiduous and unwearying as Dickens surely very few men ever were, or could possibly be. He appeared almost ubiquitous and sleepless. We had many (I really think, thirteen) rehearsals, six or seven of them after everybody knew his part, letter perfect." Dickens was one of the most successful, too, of the actors, making up in one instance as an old woman who might have been a near relation to Mrs. Gamp. This woman announces the coming of her brother, and making exit from the stage Dickens returned in a marvellously short space of time, in the character of the brother. "He appears," says one who described the scene, "to be at least ninety years of age, not merely by the common stage make-up of long white hair, large white eyebrows, blinking pink eyelids, and painted wrinkles and furrows, but by feebleness of limbs, a body pressed down by the weight and workings of time, and suffering from accumulated infirmities. He is supported carefully by one arm, and now and then on each side, as he very slowly comes forward. The old sexton is hopelessly deaf, and his voice has a quailing, garrulous fatuity." His letters written at this time to his comrades have frequent reference to all these high jinks.

A new Christmas book, the last of the series, "The Haunted Man and the Ghost's Bargain," was published at Christmas, 1848, and then Dickens began his new, and as many will agree, his greatest novel, "David Copperfield," which was issued in twenty monthly parts, beginning May, 1849, and ending November, 1850. Of that book it is needless here to speak in detail; its relation to Dickens's own life has been pointed

out in Mr. Whipple's Introduction, but it may be worth while to remind the reader that it was written at what may fairly be called the height of Dickens's prosperity, and, more particularly, when his power was most conspicuous and abounded in various directions. At the outset a son was born to him, and he named him Henry Fielding, with a conscious reference to his own deliberate essay at fiction under the stimulus of that great master. He had shown his power in many forms; now he would gather his forces into the representation of a life, and under the combination of the dramatic faculty with his intense interest in himself, he began the story of his new character not only in the first person, but with vivid recollection of his own boyhood.

In these years his public appearance was not confined to theatrical entertainments. He was in great demand as chairman at public meetings, especially in connection with reformatory, educational, and philanthropic movements. In the section of this volume devoted to his speeches, one may read how successfully he turned his humorous and vivacious power in this direction, and how earnestly he spoke in defence of whatever cause drew his sympathy.

It was in the midst of this superabundant energy that Dickens at last brought into definite shape the notion which from the beginning of his literary career had been haunting him, that of a periodical which should in some way differ from all other periodicals and bear the stamp of his own nature. Every projector of a periodical beguiles himself with the delusion that he is to produce something widely different from any existing journal, and in his ideal such a product always has a distinction; but the reading world only faintly apprehends the characteristics which mark it off from all others. Dickens when revolving the thought of his periodical tried to convey the impression which it made upon him to others. He wrote to Forster, and after giving an account of the matter of fact element in the paper, and the character of so much of the contents as could be described under the word "compilation," he proceeded: —

"The original matter to be essays, reviews, letters, theatrical criticisms, etc., etc., as amusing as possible, but all distinctly and boldly going to what in one's own view ought to be the spirit of the people and the time. . . . Now to bind all this

together, and to get a character established, as it were, which any of the writers may maintain without difficulty, I want to suppose a certain SHADOW, which may go into any place, by sunlight, moonlight, starlight, firelight, candlelight, and be in all homes, and all nooks and corners, and be supposed to be cognisant of everything, and go everywhere, without the least difficulty. . . . I don't think it would do to call the paper THE SHADOW; but I want something tacked to that title, to express the notion of its being a cheerful, useful, and always welcome Shadow. . . . I have an enormous difficulty in expressing what I mean, in this stage of the business; but I think the importance of the idea is that, once stated on paper, there is no difficulty in keeping it up. That it presents an odd, unsubstantial, whimsical new thing; a sort of previously unthought-of Power going about. . . . I want to express in the title and in the grasp of the idea to express also, that is the thing at everybody's elbow, and in everybody's footsteps. . . . Now, do you make anything out of this?"

Dickens seemed unaware that in this somewhat fantastic sketch he was really outlining a paper of which his personality was to be the genius. Could he have materialized his fancy everything in the paper would have partaken in some sort of his own ebullient nature. Indeed, when the journal took practical shape and he was casting about for a title he actually proposed "CHARLES DICKENS. A weekly journal designed for the instruction and entertainment of all classes of readers. CONDUCTED BY HIMSELF." The whole scheme was a signal illustration of the manner in which Dickens's mind worked; he was seeking consciously or unconsciously expression of himself. His genius was dramatic, and his fancy in the construction of characters illimitable; both rested upon an enormous power of surface observation, the observation, that is, of immediate phenomena, but behind all lay a certain imperious power which was the consciousness of self, so that when as in this case Dickens was formulating a scheme for something so familiar as a weekly journal, a journal which differed one may say from "Chambers' Journal" only in having its contents suffused with a more genial spirit, he was really spreading himself over the whole matter and expecting to communicate some portion of himself to every part. To set the matter in its strongest light, one cannot extract a personal Shakespeare

from the whole body of plays and poems, nor construct him out of his contact with other men. Dickens has written himself over and over his works and disclosed himself to his generation.

The actual journal which resulted was "Household Words," [1]

[1] The first number of *Household Words* contained the following, "A Preliminary Word," in which Dickens sought to embody his notion of the paper: —

"The name that we have chosen for this publication expresses, generally, the desire we have at heart in originating it.

"We aspire to live in the household affections, and to be numbered among the household thoughts, of our readers. We hope to be the comrade and friend of many thousands of people, of both sexes, and of all ages and conditions, on whose faces we may never look. We seek to bring into innumerable homes, from the stirring world around us, the knowledge of many social wonders, good and evil, that are not calculated to render any of us less ardently persevering in ourselves, less tolerant of one another, less faithful in the progress of mankind, less thankful for the privilege of living in this summer dawn of time.

"No mere utilitarian spirit, no iron binding of the mind to grim realities, will give a harsh tone to our *Household Words*. In the bosoms of the young and old, of the well-to-do and of the poor, we would tenderly cherish that light of Fancy which is inherent in the human breast; which, according to its nurture, burns with an inspiring flame, or sinks into a sullen glare, but which (or woe betide that day!) can never be extinguished. To show to all that in all familiar things, even in those which are repellent on the surface, there is Romance enough, if we will find it out; to teach the hardest workers at this whirling wheel of toil that their lot is not necessarily a moody, brutal fact, excluded from the sympathies and graces of imagination; to bring the greater and the lesser in degree, together, upon that wide field, and mutually dispose them to a better acquaintance and a kinder understanding, — is one main object of our *Household Words*.

"The mightier inventions of this age are not, to our thinking, all material, but have a kind of souls in their stupendous bodies which may find expression in *Household Words*. The traveller whom we accompany on his railroad or his steamboat journey may gain, we hope, some compensation for incidents which these later generations have outlived, in new associations with the Power that bears him onward; with the habitations and the ways of life of crowds of his fellow creatures among whom he passes like the wind; even with the towering chimneys he may see, spirting out fire and smoke upon the prospect. The swart giants, Slaves of the Lamp of Knowledge, have their thousand and one tales no less than the Genii of the East; and these, in all their wild, grotesque, and fanciful aspects, in all their many phases of endurance, in all their many moving lessons of compassion and consideration, we design to tell.

"Our *Household Words* will not be echoes of the present time alone, but of the past too. Neither will they treat of the hopes, the enterprises, triumphs, joys, and sorrows, of this country only, but, in some degree, of those of every nation upon earth. For nothing can be a source of real interest in one of them, without concerning all the rest.

"We have considered what an ambition it is to be admitted into many homes with affection and confidence; to be regarded as a friend by children and old people; to be thought of in affliction and in happiness; to people the sick-room with airy shapes 'that give delight and hurt not;' and to be associated with the

and Dickens was fortunate in securing for assistant editor, W. H. Wills, whose acquaintance he had made when engaged on "The Daily News." To the journal Dickens contributed a number of brief papers which in previous editions of his writings bore the title "Reprinted Pieces," but here are included under his Miscellanies as "Contributions to Household Words," as also special sketches in Christmas numbers, brought together here with the Christmas books. Two serials also first saw the light in this journal: "A Child's History of England," and "Hard Times." The periodical was not, however, merely a receptacle for his writing, or a business adventure alone. The half-fantastic conception he had formed of it did not interfere with a practical notion of editorial management, and the order, which was so conspicuous an element in Dickens's make-up, governed him now in the details of "Household Words." As an editor he succeeded admirably where before he had failed dismally, because the material in which he was working was precisely that most natural to him, whereas in "The Daily

harmless laughter and the gentle tears of many hearths. We know the great responsibility of such a privilege; its vast reward; the pictures that it conjures up, in hours of solitary labor, of a multitude moved by one sympathy; the solemn hopes which it awakens in the labourer's breast, that he may be free from self-reproach in looking back at last upon his work, and that his name may be remembered in his race in time to come, and borne by the dear objects of his love with pride. The hand that writes these faltering lines, happily associated with some Household Words before to-day, has known enough of such experiences to enter in an earnest spirit upon this new task, and with an awakened sense of all that it involves.

"Some tillers of the field into which we now come have been before us, and some are here whose high usefulness we readily acknowledge, and whose company it is an honour to join. But there are others here — Bastards of the Mountain, Draggled fringe on the Red Cap, Panders to the basest passions of the lowest natures — whose existence is a national reproach. And these, we should consider it our highest service to displace.

"Thus, we begin our career! The adventurer in the old fairy story, climbing towards the summit of a steep eminence on which the object of his search was stationed, was surrounded by a roar of voices, crying to him, from the stones in the way, to turn back. All the voices we hear cry, Go on! The stones that call to us have sermons in them, as the trees have tongues, as there are books in the running brooks, as there is good in everything! They, and the time, cry out to us, Go on! With a fresh heart, a light step, and a hopeful courage, we begin the journey. The road is not so rough that it need daunt our feet: the way is not so steep that we need stop for breath, and, looking faintly down, be stricken motionless. Go on is all we hear; Go on! In a glow already, with the air from yonder height upon us, and the inspiriting voices joining in this acclamation, we echo back the cry, and go on cheerily."

News" he was on unfamiliar ground. He showed fine judgment in the choice of his contributors, was generous to them to a fault, and rejoiced in their success as he would in his own, for Dickens was no selfish egotist.

He did not intend making the journal a political one in the sense that "The Daily News" was, but his impatience at wrong and his contempt for shams naturally made him desirous of using his magazine as a weapon as well as an instrument for instruction and amusement. At one time he had a plan for occasional papers to be called "The Member for Nowhere," and though he abandoned this particular scheme, there was a tincture of radicalism in the journal and more especially in his own writings. Indeed, it is observable how from this time forward no one of his long novels but contained jibes and flings at some form of governmental disorder. "I am hourly strengthened in my belief," he wrote in February, 1855, "that our political aristocracy and our tuft-hunting are the death of England."

VIII

UNREST

DICKENS was so impulsive and so frank in the disclosure of his feelings, and his writings, both public and private, bear such unmistakable evidence of his personal history, that one is able, without undue confidence, to trace the changes in his life, and as we have chosen to call the years ending with the publication of "David Copperfield" and the establishment of "Household Words" the years of culmination, when he was at the height of his power, and in the fullest felicity of domestic and social life, so we feel justified in giving a title to the next period of seven or eight years which characterizes the temper of his mind when a subtle reaction had set in, and physical and spiritual power seemed to be in conflict with forces which tended to undermine his stability.

Mr. A. W. Ward has pointed out, in his study of Dickens in the "English Men of Letters" series, that a close acquaintance with Wilkie Collins and an admiration for his art was having its influence on Dickens in leading him to abandon what may be called the eighteenth century style of fiction in which adventure, centring about the hero, was the theme for a more deliberate construction with plot and sub-plot. Perhaps it is quite as much to the point to say that the exhilarating experience which Dickens passed through as an amateur actor, and the interest which he took in dramatic composition, coupled with his reformatory fervor, induced him to make the change, for change it was, from the mode of "David Copperfield," to the mode of "Bleak House." Be this as it may, "David Copperfield" was the last of his novels, with one exception, in which one may trace the strong influence of his memory and imagination playing about his own personal history. It would seem as if, in writing that half-autobiographic novel, he had done with himself, had exhausted the possibilities of his own early life, and was forced to use the material which

came to his hand independently of its bearing upon his personal consciousness. But in trying to get away from himself, he was losing hold of one of the controlling forces in his art; in shifting the centre of gravity in his novel from a person to an impersonal organization, like the Circumlocution Office, in adopting a plot which left him small chance to avail himself of his own life and experience, he was both witnessing to a change in his own spiritual economy and by his effort to escape into a more objective art intensifying the indefinite unrest which was from this time forward to find manifold and often painful expression. Perhaps the statement is over strong, yet one is drawn to the feeling that, after allowing full swing to himself and making the world revolve about his being, Dickens was now to know the difficulty of emancipating himself from a thraldom to self.

The little world in which he dwelt was invaded by death. In the summer of 1848 his favorite sister Fanny had died; at the end of March, 1851, his father died, and a fortnight later, his infant daughter Dora Annie died, and the announcement to him of her death was heightened in a tragically dramatic fashion which could scarcely fail to move one of Dickens's temperament. He had agreed to preside at a meeting of the General Theatrical Fund. Half an hour before he was to speak, Forster was called out of the room to be told by a servant from Dickens's house of Dora's death. With a friend's right he withheld the news from Dickens until he should have performed his function. Dickens spoke almost prophetically in the address to which Forster was called on to listen. He spoke of actors having to come from scenes of sickness, even of death, to play their parts before an audience who knew them only in their representative characters. "Yet how often is it with all of us," he went on, "that in our several spheres we have to do violence to our feelings, and to hide our hearts in carrying on this fight of life, if we would bravely discharge in it our duties and responsibilities."

The child was buried at Highgate near her grandfather. This was the last year of Dickens's residence in Devonshire Terrace, and he spent the summer from May to November at Broadstairs, making there his longest stay, and not again resorting to the place. On his return to London he made a new home for himself in Tavistock House. The next year he

spent the summer months at Dover, and in 1853 he went, after a painful illness, to Boulogne, which he has described in a friendly manner in "Our French Watering Place." In the fall of that year, when he had finished "Bleak House," he took a trip into Switzerland and Italy with Wilkie Collins and Mr. Egg the painter. Again in 1854 he was in Boulogne, in 1855 he carried his family and his work to Paris, and in 1856 he was in Boulogne again; but these foreign residences were interrupted by frequent returns to England.

In 1853 he entered also, with little thought of what it would lead to, upon a new phase of activity. It will be remembered how he made a winter journey from Italy to England just before Christmas, 1844, to read his new Christmas book to a company of friends, and from time to time he gave similar private readings. His frequent appearance on the stage had kept alive easily his histrionic interest, and now at the end of December, 1853, he gave two readings in Birmingham — one of "A Christmas Carol," the other of "The Cricket on the Hearth" — in aid of the New Midland Institute. He had promised these readings at the beginning of the year in a letter in which he said: "There would be some novelty in the thing, as I have never done it in public, though I have in private, and (if I may say so) with a great effect on the hearers." The readings at once roused great enthusiasm and led to repeated invitations from various places for similar help. There could be no question of the increase of Dickens's audience. In August of this year, as he was finishing "Bleak House," he wrote to a friend: "The story has taken extraordinarily, especially during the last five or six months, when its purpose has been gradually working itself out. It has retained its immense circulation from the first, beating dear old 'Copperfield' by a round ten thousand or more. I have never had so many readers." But the readings in a measure meant more. They meant a face to face audience, instantaneous applause, the stirring of the author's heart as the sentiment, the humor, the pathos of his stories found a visible, immediate response in the people before him. In a letter to M. de Cerjat, written a few days after his Birmingham readings, he says: "I think you see 'The Times,' and if so, you will have seen a very graceful and good account of the Birmingham readings. It was the most remarkable thing that England could produce, I

IX

GADSHILL AND A BROKEN HOME

For a while it seems as though Dickens could secure an anchorage for himself as he was thus tossed to and fro. In his youthful days and later in his strolls he had often looked affectionately at the Gadshill (corrupted from God's Hill) Place, not far from Rochester. Suddenly he discovered, through his associate Mr. Wills, that the place was for sale. It appealed to him then chiefly as a good investment, and after negotiations extending over three or four months he became the owner of the place the middle of March, 1856. He grew more and more interested as he expended money on it, and from time to time occupied it in the summer, and finally, when Tavistock House was sold in 1860, he removed most of his effects to it, and made it his permanent home.

The place, more identified with Dickens than any other of his residences, appeals strongly to one's sense of beauty and historical and literary imagination. In one of his "Uncommercial Traveller" papers, the chapter on Tramps, Dickens has set forth well the charm of the locality itself. "I have my eye," he writes, "on a piece of Kentish road, bordered on either side by a wood, and having on one hand, between the road dust and the trees, a skirting patch of grass. Wild flowers grow in abundance on this spot, and it lies high and airy, with a distant river stealing away to the ocean, like a man's life. To gain the milestone here, which the moss, primroses, violets, bluebells, and wild roses would soon render illegible but for peering travellers pushing them aside with their sticks, you must come up a steep hill, come which way you may. So all the tramps with carts or caravans — the gipsy tramp, the show tramp, the Cheap Jack — find it impossible to resist the temptations of the place, and all turn the horse loose when they come to it, and boil the pot. Bless the place, I love the ashes of the vagabond fires that have scorched its grass!"

It was to this place that Dickens turned, veriest vagabond of

them all, and with a straying of his nature more painful than merry. He took great delight in the ownership, and in a frame on the landing was the following text, done in illuminated letters by Owen Jones: "THIS HOUSE, GADSHILL PLACE, stands on the summit of Shakespeare's Gadshill, ever memorable for its association with Sir John Falstaff in his noble fancy. *But, my lads, my lads, to-morrow morning by four o'clock, early at Gadshill! there are pilgrims going to Canterbury with rich offerings, and traders riding to London with fat purses. I have vizards for you all; you have horses for yourselves.*"

In a letter written to M. de Cerjat in the summer of 1858, Dickens speaks affectionately of his new home: "At this present moment I am on my little Kentish freehold (*not* in top-boots, and not particularly prejudiced that I know of), looking on as pretty a view out of my study window as you will find in a long day's English ride. My little place is a grave, red brick house, which I have added to, and stuck bits upon in all manner of ways, so that it is as pleasantly irregular, and as violently opposed to all architectural ideas, as the most hopeful man could possibly desire. The robbery was committed before the door, on the man with the treasure, and Falstaff ran away from the identical spot of ground now covered by the room in which I write. A little rustic alehouse, called the Sir John Falstaff, is over the way — has been over the way, ever since, in honour of the event. Cobham Woods and Park are behind the house; the distant Thames in front; the Medway with Rochester and its old castle and cathedral, on one side. The whole stupendous property is on the old Dover Road." The rooms were all of moderate size, but the house was thoroughly homelike, the very promise of domestic felicity.

It is one of the sorrowful ironies of his restless life that when he seemed thus to be planting himself in a sure refuge for the rest of his days, and fortifying himself against chance and change, he should be disturbing the very foundation of his home, and losing the reality while holding still the shadowy simulacrum. In the spring of 1858 he effected an arrangement by which a private separation from Mrs. Dickens took place. He afforded her an annual income of six hundred pounds; her eldest son made his home with her, and her children had free intercourse with her. In his will, made eleven years later,

Dickens further provided that she should receive the income, during her lifetime, of eight thousand pounds. So far, looked upon as an arrangement for the comfort of his wife from the time of separation to her death, the transaction has the air almost of magnanimity, and Dickens in his will appears so to have justified himself, inserting a clause which states that he had thus generously provided for Mrs. Dickens, "while," in his words, "all the great charges of a numerous and expensive family have devolved wholly upon myself." In a public card, published in "Household Words," June 12, 1858, shortly after the separation had taken place, he resented with bitter indignation a slanderous construction which had been put upon the act.[1] His biographers have agreed in treating the affair as strictly a private one, and in the volumes of letters published by his sister-in-law and daughter, the whole incident is passed over in silence.

In such glimpses as we are allowed to get of Dickens previous to the catastrophe we have no difficulty in perceiving something of his state of mind. Indeed Forster gives at some length a letter which Dickens wrote him, disclosing clearly his attitude toward his wife: "Poor Catherine and I," he says, "are not made for each other, and there is no help for it. It

[1] The following appeared in *Household Words*, June 12, 1858: —

PERSONAL

. . . By some means, arising out of wickedness, or out of folly, or out of inconceivable wild chance, or out of all three, this trouble has been made the occasion of misrepresentations, most grossly false, most monstrous, and most cruel, — involving, not only me, but innocent persons dear to my heart, and innocent persons of whom I have no knowledge, if, indeed, they have any existence, — and so widely spread, that I doubt if one reader in a thousand will peruse these lines by whom some touch of the breath of these slanders will not have passed, like an unwholesome air.

Those who know me and my nature need no assurance under my hand that such calumnies are as irreconcilable with me, as they are, in their frantic incoherence, with one another. But there is a great multitude who know me through my writings, and who do not know me otherwise; and I cannot bear that one of them should be left in doubt, or hazard of doubt, through my poorly shrinking from taking the unusual means to which I now resort, of circulating the Truth.

I most solemnly declare, then, — and this I do, both in my own name and in my wife's name, — that all the lately whispered rumours touching the trouble at which I have glanced, are abominably false. And that whosoever repeats one of them after this denial will lie as wilfully and as foully as it is possible for any false witness to lie, before Heaven and earth.

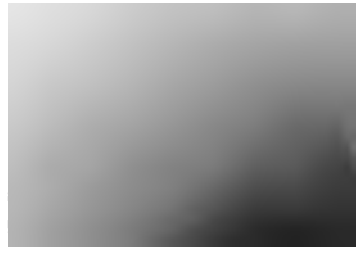
CHARLES DICKENS.

is not only that she makes me uneasy and unhappy, but that I make her so, too — and much more so. She is exactly what you know, in the way of being amiable and complying; but we are strangely ill-assorted for the bond there is between us. God knows she would have been a thousand times happier if she had married another kind of man, and that her avoidance of this destiny would have been at least equally good for us both. I am often cut to the heart by thinking what a pity it is, for her own sake, that I ever fell in her way; and if I were sick or disabled to-morrow, I know how sorry she would be, and how deeply grieved myself, to think how we had lost each other. But exactly the same incompatibility would arise, the moment I was well again; and nothing on earth could make her understand me, or suit us to each other. Her temperament will not go with mine. It mattered not so much when we had only ourselves to consider, but reasons have been growing since which make it all but hopeless that we should even try to struggle on." Forster wrote him, apparently as an honest friend should, and Dickens in his reply said: "To the most part of what you say — Amen! You are not so tolerant as perhaps you might be of the wayward and unsettled feeling which is part (I suppose) of the tenure on which one holds an imaginative life, and which I have, as you ought to know well, often only kept down by riding over it like a dragoon — but let that go by. I make no maudlin complaint. I agree with you as to the very possible incidents, even not less bearable than mine, that might and must often occur to the married condition when it is entered into very young. I am always deeply sensible of the wonderful exercise I have of life and its highest sensations, and have said to myself for years, and have honestly and truly felt, this is the drawback to such a career, and is not to be complained of. I say it and feel it now as strongly as ever I did; and, as I told you in my last, I do not with that view put all this forward. But the years have not made it easier to bear for either of us; and, for her sake as well as mine, the wish will force itself upon me that something might be done. I know too well it is impossible. There is the fact, and that is all one can say. Nor are you to suppose that I disguise from myself what might be urged on the other side. I claim no immunity from blame. There is plenty of fault on my side, I dare say, in the way of a thou-

sand uncertainties, caprices, and difficulties of disposition; but only one thing will alter all that, and that is, the end which alters everything."

We are not concerned with the apportionment of blame in this case. Moreover Mrs. Dickens appears never to have put forth in her own name or through any confidential friend any statement of the situation as it looked to her. We are concerned only with the incident as illustrating the character of the man and as influencing his course of life thereafter. He wrote to M. de Cerjat not long after the separation took place: "The blessed woods and fields have done me a world of good, and I am quite myself again. . . . I have written lightly enough, because I want you to know that I am becoming cheerful and hearty;" and his whole correspondence at this time is characterized by the most irrepressible good-humor. No doubt his feelings were lacerated by the scenes which led up to his final resolution. If he could be so ungovernable when it was a question of breaking with Bentley, what must it have been when sundering the most sacred tie. His sympathy with himself was unbounded, and the undisciplined, imperious nature which was wont to intoxicate itself with success and homage, the excitable mind which drank deep at the well of imaginary emotion, and could scarcely restrain itself over its dramatic assumption of all sorts of feelings, was helpless before a real contingency which made himself his most pitied object. The rebound from a state of self-commiseration which was so profound naturally was extreme, and probably Dickens never was so delightful a companion, so full of high spirits, as when he had put away his wife.[1]

[1] The subject is treated at some length and with keen analysis by Mr. Whipple in his Introduction to *Little Dorrit*.



X

PUBLIC READINGS

THE experience which Dickens had in reading from his works for the benefit of local charities, showed him not only that he could reach an audience in a very immediate fashion, but that he had in this mode of publication a very considerable means of support. It was an easy step from public reading for charity to public reading for his own benefit, but he did not take the step with alacrity. It was at Christmas, 1844, as the reader will remember, that Dickens read aloud his Christmas story "The Chimes" to a party of friends in Forster's rooms, just before the little book was published. He could have no doubts of his effectiveness as a reader thereafter, and from time to time he exercised his gifts before private audiences, but it was not till December 27, 1853, that he read his "Christmas Carol" in the Town Hall of Birmingham, taking three hours for the performance. The pressure upon him after this for his services as a reader could have but one result. He read many times as we have stated, and at last in the spring of 1858 he faced the situation deliberately, and considered if he should not take up the business of reading from his own writings.

It is a little singular to find that now, when about to begin the undertaking, he did not feel the entire confidence in himself which might justly follow from the many trials he had made. Still he was well convinced that the venture would bring him in large returns, and, with his customary foresight and methodical way, he sketched his course with great care. The time, indeed, was ripe for the experiment. He had no novel on his hands, and he had experienced a keen sense of the effort required for writing. More than all, his household troubles were culminating. In canvassing the future he may well have contemplated the necessity for a substantial increase of his income, and, aside from that practical matter, the rest-

lessness which consumed him could scarcely fail to drive him into a course which promised at any rate to take him away from himself. "I must do *something*," he wrote, "or I shall wear my heart away. I can see no better thing to do that is half so hopeful in itself, or half so well suited to my restless state."

Dickens's intention at first was to confine himself at the outset to the "Carol," and to write a new story to be read later; but upon planning his work definitely he abandoned the notion of a new story and enlarged the scope of his selection. His first series, accordingly, comprised the "Carol," "The Chimes," the trial scene in "Pickwick," selections from "Dombey and Son," with a view to bringing out the character of Paul Dombey; "Boots at the Holly-Tree Inn," the story of Captain Doubledick in "The Seven Poor Travellers," and scenes from "Martin Chuzzlewit," which displayed the wonderful Sairey Gamp. The readings began on April 29, 1858, at St. Martin's Hall in London, and the London series continued for three months, though only sixteen nights in all were given; then followed from early in August a series of eighty-seven readings, taking in the principal places in England, Ireland, and Scotland. Dickens was back in London by the middle of November, and in the three following months gave a few readings in the city; finally in October, 1859, he gave fourteen more. The whole series, under the management of Arthur Smith, may be taken by itself, as it formed for the time being Dickens's chief occupation, and consisted in all of one hundred and twenty-five readings.

The reading by Dickens from his own writings was a very different matter from Thackeray's public readings. The latter, though known as a novelist, was really in his courses a lecturer, perhaps more properly an essayist reading aloud unpublished papers. The interest in his personality brought audiences, who listened with pleasure to the quiet, unhistrionic gentleman, closely confined to his text, who touched them by the grace of his speech. Dickens, on the other hand, brought to his task a triple character. He was an author whose personal presence was very interesting; he was, as is plain from the subjects taken, a dramatist, for he was compelled to arrange portions of a book so as to make effective dramatic scenes; and he was an actor or impersonator. He had his book before

him, but the scenes were practically committed to memory, and by voice, manner, and gesticulation, Dickens did his best to illustrate characters and action. "His delivery," says G. A. Sala, "was measured, sonorous, and emphatic; he could make his audience laugh, or weep, or shudder, as he chose; the effect he produced was thrillingly impressive; but his manner was undeniably 'stagey,' and not unfrequently, on the platform, he overacted his part." It must be remembered, however, that in these readings Dickens brought to bear his experience as an amateur actor, that he had instinctively in his acting chosen melodramatic parts, and that he was, so to speak, a pioneer in what he was undertaking, for there is no doubt that his great success gave an impetus to the dramatic readings which have been so popular ever since. There was every provocation to an overdoing of his part. His own temperament, his desire to make vivid what he had vividly conceived, and the energy with which he threw himself into a new occupation all combined to make him extravagant in this species of dramatic entertainment.

The experience which he underwent in his tours is reflected in his letters. The excitement was great. Everywhere he was received tumultuously, and every reading fed the fire of his emotional nature. It was unquestionably a somewhat perilous stimulant which he was taking at this time when his nature was already overwrought, and the effect is seen in his alternate exhilaration and depression. "What Arthur's [Smith's] state has been to-night," he writes in August from Liverpool, "— he, John, Berry, and Boylett, all taking money and going mad together — you *cannot* imagine. They turned away hundreds, sold all the books, rolled on the ground of my room knee-deep in checks, and made a perfect pantomime of the whole thing." "I shall soon be able to send you," he writes to Forster, "the list of places to the 15th of November, the end. I shall be, oh, most heartily glad, when that time comes! But I must say that the intelligence and warmth of the audiences are an immense sustainment, and one that always sets me up. Sometimes before I go down to read (especially when it is in the day), I am so oppressed by having to do it that I feel perfectly unequal to the task. But the people lift me out of this directly; and I find that I have quite forgotten everything but them and the book, in a quarter of an hour."

With the firmness and good sense which came to his aid whenever he was thoroughly committed to any task, he refused all social engagements during his tours, and made hotels and not hospitable houses his temporary home. Sometimes he had members of his family with him, and often his travelling party was a large and expensive one. But the reward, except as measured by later readings in America, was ample. In Scotland he touched the highest point, netting five hundred pounds in a week. "It will be sharp work," he wrote in July to Cerjat, when about setting out on his tour; "but probably a certain musical clinking will come of it, which will mitigate the hardship;" and the exaltation which he shows in the pecuniary results is a part of the feverish enthusiasm with which he noted again and again great audiences, loud applause, and manifold expressions of personal interest. He was in the thick of it all, and with his imperious demand for recognition he was virtually his own manager, treasurer, and even bookseller, for wherever he went, copies of his readings were sold, and the sale of the regular editions of his books was stimulated. The wear and tear which he suffered was very great, but not so appreciable now as at a later date. There can be no question, however, that these readings brought also an access of life; that he realized with exquisite pleasure the great hold which he had through his writings upon the world of his time. His recognition of this fact was made more easy by the issue now of a new library edition of his works, and of a French translation of the same, a translation which is singularly felicitous, and Dickens is, with Scott and Cooper, the favorite reading of French young people outside of their own literature.

XI

"ALL THE YEAR ROUND," AND ITS STORIES

THE disaster which had overtaken Dickens carried other changes with it. The "Personal," which he had been violently impelled to print in "Household Words," he had insisted should appear also in "Punch," which was published by Bradbury and Evans, the publishers of "Household Words," and for a dozen years past, the publishers also of his books. This, Bradbury and Evans declined to do, on the very natural ground that "Punch" was a comic journal. In consequence of this, and possibly other disagreements, Dickens resolved to break off his connection with Bradbury and Evans, return with his books to his former publishers, Chapman and Hall, and, since he owned five eighths and controlled another eighth of "Household Words," to bring that journal to a close and start a new one on the same general plan, which was, however, to be published independently and not by the publishers of his books. The disagreement was especially unfortunate since it involved family affairs, for Mr. Charles Dickens, Jr., was afterward to marry Miss Evans, the daughter of one of the partners.

The case of "Household Words" went into chancery, and, as each party refused to sell his interest, the court took the matter up, a sale was forced, and Dickens bought the property. As a result two new periodicals sprang from the ashes: "Once a Week," undertaken by Bradbury and Evans, and "All the Year Round," which Dickens conducted, and his interest in which he bequeathed to his son Charles. The paper was started April 30, 1859, and enjoyed a steady success. In three months Dickens could write: "So well has 'All the Year Round' gone that it was yesterday able to repay me, with five per cent. interest, all the money I advanced for its establishment (paper, print, etc., all paid, down to the last number), and yet to leave a good £500 balance at the

banker's!" The success was won in part by the considerable contribution which Dickens himself made; in part by the liberal use which he made of serial stories by Charles Reade, Bulwer, Wilkie Collins, and others. It was the heyday of serials, and "All the Year Round" rode on the top of the wave. His Christmas stories also, in which Dickens used collaboration freely, both added to the fame of the journal and drew upon its success. The edition of the number containing these ran up as high as three hundred thousand.

The first important contribution which Dickens made to "All the Year Round" was "A Tale of Two Cities," which was published in weekly instalments, beginning with the first number, April 30, 1859, and closing with that for November 26 of the same year. The novel was also published in monthly parts with illustrations by H. K. Browne, during the months from June to December. The story is a singular illustration of the commanding force of Dickens's genius. Nothing better can be found in the range of his writing to show the force of his will, which could plan and execute a novel quite outside of his customary field. We have already pointed out how he deliberately essayed a departure from his former style when he constructed "Bleak House;" he went still farther away when he wrote "A Tale of Two Cities." It has been called, with reason, a *tour de force*, but when this term is applied to a novel of the sustained character of this book, it somehow is inadequate to express the mastery of the art of fiction which Dickens disclosed. Humor is almost wholly lacking, and its absence is a still further witness to the confidence with which Dickens carried forward his task; he did not need to have recourse to this his freest power, and he failed to use it because it did not comport with his design. Is it too remote a suggestion that Dickens threw his whole weight into the scene of Carton's sacrificial death because at this period of his own life he was driven into depths of consciousness which sought irresistibly some dramatic expression? Be this as it may, the book stands for more dignity, more freedom from pure sentimentalism, than any one of his writings.

With the publication of this novel the pecuniary fortunes of Dickens in America appear to have taken an advantageous start. He congratulates himself that he had sold the right of publication in America, by giving advance sheets and permit-

ting publication one day later than in London for a thousand pounds. It was in the summer of the same year that he sold to the "New York Ledger" the first publication of "Hunted Down," a story not longer than half of one of the numbers of serial stories, and reprinted afterward by him in "All the Year Round." For this also he had a thousand pounds, and now came many urgent offers to him to repeat his readings in America, but the time for this had not yet come. His business connection with America, however, from this time increased in importance, and when he came to issue his next novel, "Great Expectations," he easily made arrangements for its reproduction in America, selling the proof-sheets again for a thousand pounds.

This novel appeared also in "All the Year Round," in weekly instalments, running from December, 1860, to August, 1861. He was stimulated in part to write it and to publish it as a serial in his journal, because there had been a slight falling off in "All the Year Round," after "A Tale of Two Cities" was finished, and he was convinced that, though a separate publication of "Great Expectations" might be more profitable to him in itself, such a course would shut him out from a novel in the journal, and that property was too important to be disregarded. With almost a return to his old light-heartedness Dickens resumed at a bound his familiar manner, and in this novel reminded his readers how, after all, the native bent of his genius, when most spontaneous, was in the direction of sentiment and humor.

Perhaps some of the ease with which he fell upon the playfulness of "Great Expectations," was due to the fresh access to nature which he had been enjoying when engaged on that delightful series of papers intervening between the two novels in "All the Year Round." "The Uncommercial Traveller" had a happy suggestion in its title, which gave the papers in the series an advantage over the desultory sketches of a similar character which had appeared in "Household Words," and are collected in this edition under the head of "Miscellanies." Some of those papers — as for instance "Our School" — might readily have been written for "All the Year Round," but this series as a whole has a mellow tone due in part to the genial fancy which permitted Dickens to write out of a personal mood; and whether or not he was deliberately searching for

subjects, his strolls about Gadshill, quickened by his memory of early days, more than once gave him hints for those sketches on the border-land of fancy and fact, which offer some of the most pleasing illustrations of his quieter, more restful hours. Three years later he returned to this scheme, and printed a second series in his journal.

The relations which he held to his associates on "All the Year Round" were, as in the case of "Household Words," of the most friendly sort, and if his son made a marriage with the daughter of one of the publishers of that journal, so his younger daughter Kate was married in the summer of 1860 to one of his favorite contributors, Charles Allston Collins, a brother of Wilkie Collins. The death of Dickens's brother Alfred followed shortly after, and at this time Dickens decided to dispose of his town house, Tavistock House, and concentrate his householding interest on Gadshill.

Meanwhile, he resumed his public readings with increased success, and in the midst of his labor he was assailed by what for the moment was a very strong temptation. A man from Australia came forward with the offer of ten thousand pounds for readings there in an eight months' course. Americans had before held out inducements, but the war for the Union, now in process, made it impracticable to undertake readings there. If he could go to Australia, expatriate himself for a while and make ever so much money, it might be worth while, and greatly relieve the pressure upon him. He reasoned that, if a manager were ready to pay him such a sum, he could make even greater profit by assuming the entire risk, and he proposed to take with him some man of letters like Charles Collins for a secretary, perhaps even his eldest daughter also; and he went so far as to project a series of papers for "All the Year Round," to be called "The Uncommercial Traveller Upside Down." The whole scheme was involved with the labor of undertaking another serial novel, which he knew he must undertake at once if he found no alternative, but he shrank from the discomforts and the unknown, but not unimagined, troubles of the venture. "I know perfectly well beforehand," he wrote, "how unspeakably wretched I should be. But these renewed and larger offers tempt one. I can force myself to go aboard a ship, and I can force myself to do at that reading-desk what I have done a hundred times; but whether,

with all this unsettled, fluctuating distress in my mind, I could force an original book out of it, is another question."

The very great difficulty of making proper provision for his family in his absence seems to have been the conclusive argument which prevailed to keep him at home, and he went on with his readings, spending a couple of months in Paris with his sister-in-law and daughter at the end of 1862, and occupied otherwise mainly with the conduct of "All the Year Round." A couple of Christmas stories passed before he was finally ready to undertake the new serial which had been perplexing him, and the title of which he had hit upon as far back as 1861. "Our Mutual Friend" was to be the last complete novel published in the old twenty-month serial mode, and from time to time for the next three years he made half ineffectual attempts at getting at it. He had been in the habit for ten years of jotting down memoranda for books, and the last of these notes appears to have been made for this book. They offer sometimes suggestions only imperfectly carried out in the book, as when he writes: —

"Gibbon's Decline and Fall. The two characters. One reporting to the other as he reads. Both getting confused as to whether it is not all going on now."

Bella's father, with his anachronism of dress, is better in the book, however, than in this note: —

"Buying poor shabby — FATHER? — a new hat. So incongruous that it makes him like African King Boy, or King George; who is usually well dressed when he has nothing upon him but a cocked hat or a waistcoat."

Podsnap is easily recognized behind the following: —

"I stand by my friends and acquaintances, — not for their sakes, but because they are *my* friends and acquaintances. *I* know them, *I* have licensed them, they have taken out *my* certificate. Ergo, I champion them as myself. . . . And by denying a thing, supposes that he altogether puts it out of existence."

And here is Eugene Wrayburn: —

"If they were great things, I, the untrustworthy man in little things, would do them earnestly — But, oh, no, I would n't! . . . As to the question whether I, Eugene, lying ill and sick even unto death, may be consoled by the representation that, coming through this illness, I shall begin a new life, and have

energy and purpose and all I have yet wanted, '*I hope* I should, but *I know* I should n't. Let me die, my dear.'"

The relation of Lizzie Hexam to her brother had its origin apparently in a memorandum which appears to have been intended for somewhat fuller elaboration: —

"A man, and his wife — or daughter — or niece. The man, a reprobate and ruffian; the woman (or girl) with good in her, and with compunctions. He believes nothing, and defies everything; yet has suspicions always, that she is 'praying against' his evil schemes, and making them go wrong. He is very much opposed to this, and is always angrily harping on it. If she *must* pray, why can't she pray in their favour, instead of going against 'em? She 's always ruining me — she always is — and calls that, Duty! There 's a religious person! Calls it Duty to fly in my face! Calls it Duty to go sneaking against me!"

The novel was begun in May, 1864, and ended in November, 1865. It was illustrated by Marcus Stone, son of Dickens's old friend, Frank Stone. It is indicative of the effort which Dickens made in writing the book that he no longer entered gayly upon the publication before he had written much. He resolved to have five numbers ready before the first was published, but was already anxious before this task was completed. "If I were to lose," he wrote, "a page of the five numbers I have proposed to myself to be ready by the publication day, I should feel that I had fallen short. I have grown hard to satisfy, and write very slowly. And I have so much — not fiction — that *will* be thought of, when I don't want to think of it, that I am forced to take more care than I once took." Again and again in the progress of the work he was overtaken by illness, or rendered sad by the death of friends; he was deprived even of his great solace of walking by a disorder in his foot which ultimately was connected with the cause of his death. "Work and worry," he wrote, "without exercise, would soon make an end of me. If I were not going away now, I should break down. No one knows as I know to-day how near to it I have been." He did not himself know either how near he was to the end of life, and he describes in the postscript to "Our Mutual Friend" the very narrow escape he had from death in a railway accident at Staplehurst as he was returning from the excursion which he

took to France just after writing the words above. His tired nerves received a shock at the time from which he never fully recovered.

"Our Mutual Friend" was followed the same season by one of Dickens's most popular Christmas numbers, "Dr. Marigold's Prescriptions," and two successive Christmases brought the last two of the series of Christmas stories, "Mugby Junction" and "No Thoroughfare." The real activity of Dickens's life seemed to be divided now between his conduct of "All the Year Round" and his public readings; but he was, as he had long been, in great demand at dinners and charitable meetings, and there is an agreeable description by a proof-reader of his appearance on September 17, 1866, at a meeting of the Printers' Readers.

"I well remember," he says, "on the evening when Dickens so readily consented to preside at a meeting of the London Association of Correctors of the Press, following the immortal novelist up the steps of the Salisbury Hotel, Fleet Street, where the meeting was to be held. The great master, on that occasion, met the assemblage of literary drudges with the open-hearted frankness of a brother. As he threw aside his large light cloak, he shook hands with all who sought that honour with the utmost warmth. Even now I fancy I can feel the firm grip, and see his cheery smile. He was dressed with the greatest care and elegance, as if for an evening party or state ball. His florid complexion, dark glittering eye, and grizzled beard, were very striking; but above all, the loftiness of his massive brow — denoting 'the mighty brain within' — inspired the beholder with reverence. In his speech he expressed the warmest friendship for the intelligent body of men before him, to whom, he said, he was indebted for many kindly hints, and judicious corrections and queries in his proofs, which in the hurry of business had escaped his notice while preparing 'copy,' or revising sheets for press."

XII

SECOND VISIT TO AMERICA

It was not surprising that Dickens should be drawn irresistibly to America again. Before, he had gone in search of material. Now, the humor of travel no longer possessed him, but it was very clear that he had a resource in his readings which would make a journey to America most profitable. He had had many Americans in his audience, and he was constantly receiving urgent invitations to cross the Atlantic and make it possible for his greater audience to enjoy the pleasure which Englishmen had been having repeatedly in the last nine or ten years. Moreover, though Felton and Irving were dead, he had many dear friends and correspondents in America, and the close of the war had been followed by a period of flushed prosperity which augured well for the chance of success. Indeed, there could be no possible question as to success, and accordingly Dickens began to make his plans for the venture.

He had been employing Chappell and Company as his general agents for conducting his readings, and the person who was specially detailed for the duty was Mr. George Dolby. Him therefore Dickens engaged as his agent, and sent him to America in the summer of 1867 to look the field over, with the result that on his return Dickens, after conference with him and Forster, telegraphed "yes" to Boston, and set about clearing the way. He had already sent over "Holiday Romance," and "George Silverman's Explanations," for publication in "Our Young Folks" and "The Atlantic Monthly." His friendship with Mr. Fields had indeed much to do with his enterprise. The house of Ticknor and Fields afforded valuable aid to him in carrying out his arrangements. They had a business interest in the Boston readings, and Mr. Osgood of that house was especially detailed to assist Dickens.

On November 2, a farewell banquet was given to Dickens in

the Freemasons' Hall. Lord Lytton presided, and in proposing Dickens's health said: "If I may speak as a politician, I should say that no time for his visit could be more happily chosen. For our American kinsfolk have conceived, rightly or wrongly, that they have some recent cause of complaint against ourselves, and out of all England we could not have selected an envoy — speaking not on behalf of our government, but of our people — more calculated to allay irritation and propitiate good will." Perhaps an after-dinner speech should not be pressed too far, or scrutinized too closely, but there is something a little humorous in the contrast between this lordly view and Dickens's own, as discovered in the anxious canvass of the situation to know how much money he could reasonably expect to make, and how keenly the American people were likely to remember the unpleasantness which had followed on his previous visit. In his response at the dinner he seemed even to raise a light barricade from behind which he might take a look at a possible enemy, when he said: —

"Twelve years ago, when Heaven knows I little thought I should ever be bound upon the voyage which now lies before me, I wrote, in that form of my writings which obtains by far the most extensive circulation, these words about the American nation: 'I know full well that whatever little motes my beamy eyes may have descried in theirs, they are a kind, large-hearted, generous, and great people.' In that faith I am going to see them again. In that faith I shall, please God, return from them in the spring, in that same faith to live and die."

Twenty-five years had elapsed since Dickens had visited the United States and gone home to report its bad manners; a new generation had grown up; a great war had been fought; and a people which had known its bitterest sentimental disappointment in the coldness with which the influential classes of England looked on when it was engaged in a death struggle with an evil which England had rebuked them for permitting, was not likely to waste itself in a sulky reception of Dickens. He had not been identified in the minds of the people with the cold hostility of England, and above all he had made them laugh and given them a whole literature of cheerful fun since "American Notes." If a voice here and there was lifted in criticism or recollection of a long-forgotten unpleasantness, it was drowned by the eager welcome of multitudes.

Dickens sailed November 9 for Boston. With his business judgment and scrupulous provision, he was accompanied not only by Mr. Dolby, his agent, but by a man servant and his machinist, Mr. Kelly, whose business it was to look after the arrangements for lighting his reading-desk, and making all his apparatus for reading ready in each hall where he was to read. American audiences came to look with interest upon the paraphernalia by which Dickens was attended, and those who had good opportunity for examination quickly learned how thoroughly and with what admirable precaution against untoward accidents all the preparations were made for the readings.

Dickens was too sensible of the great strain which these American readings were to make upon him to permit himself any hazard in the way of social diversion. He saw friends whom he already knew and made a few new friends, but he was not to be drawn into the vortex of hospitality, and in truth it was not long before the real question was whether he should have the physical power to keep his reading engagements. It was bitterly cold after he landed, and the exposure which he suffered in various ways, especially when *en route* from one city to another, — for railway travel in those days was far from the luxurious movement now possible, — brought on attacks of cold which made fearful inroads on a constitution already sadly impaired. But his iron will forced him on against what seemed at times an impossible condition.

He reached Boston on November 19, and gave his first reading December 2, choosing the "Carol," and the trial-scene from "Pickwick." He read three evenings more in the same week in Boston, and on Saturday went to New York. For a few weeks he travelled back and forth between New York and Boston, reading by turns in each place, with visits also to Philadelphia. Then, near the end of January he went to Baltimore and Washington, returned to New York, read there, at New Haven and Providence, and again in Boston at the end of February. Then in March he took in a number of places in New York State, and went also to Portland, New Bedford, Springfield, and other eastern cities and towns. Finally he gave farewell readings in Boston and New York, but he abandoned his first intention of reading in western cities and Canada. His last reading was in New York on the evening of April 20.

For four months and a half Dickens had been undergoing the unusual strain of these readings, and the strain was both physical and emotional. We have hinted at the struggle he made to keep his engagements, but one needs to follow him in Forster's narrative from place to place, to be aware how incessantly he was compelled to fight against disease. Already in Boston he found the wide leaps of the weather excessively trying. At Christmas he wrote: "The low action of the heart, or whatever it is, has inconvenienced me greatly this last week. On Monday night, after the reading, I was laid upon a bed, in a very faint and shady state; and on the Tuesday I did not get up till the afternoon;" and shortly after he wrote again: "I managed to read last night, but it was as much as I could do. To-day I am so very unwell that I have sent for a doctor. He has just been, and is in doubt whether I shall not have to stop reading for a while." Just before going to Philadelphia he wrote: "Well, the work is hard, the climate is hard, the life is hard; but so far the gain is enormous. My cold steadily refuses to stir an inch. It distresses me greatly at times, though it is always good enough to leave me for the needful two hours. I have tried allopathy, homœopathy, cold things, warm things, sweet things, bitter things, stimulants, narcotics, all with the same result. Nothing will touch it." At the end of March he wrote from Portland, as he toiled courageously toward the end of his engagements: "I am nearly used up. Climate, distance, catarrh, travelling, and hard work have begun (I may say so, now they are nearly all over) to tell heavily upon me. Sleeplessness besets me; and if I had engaged to go on into May, I think I must have broken down. It was well that I cut off the Far West and Canada when I did. There would else have been a sad complication. It is impossible to make the people about me understand, however zealous and devoted (it is impossible even to make Dolby understand until the pinch comes), that the power of coming up to the mark every night, with spirits and spirit, may coexist with the nearest approach to sinking under it."

Probably no single stimulant was so uniformly powerful with Dickens through this trying period as that produced by the enormous gain he was making. Except as one considers this, and remembers how deliberately he undertook the venture for the sole purpose of placing his affairs beyond the caprice of

fortune, it would be almost painful to note the eagerness with which he counts his gains from time to time, the anxiety with which he watches the political horizon — it was the time of Johnson's impeachment — to see how it is going to affect his audiences, and the feverish excitement with which he advises his confidential correspondents of the amounts he is sending to England. One is reminded of Nell's grandfather at times. His mind was kept on the *qui vive* by the constant presence of the men who were managing his readings, and by the enforced deprivation of any relief in domestic comfort.

When Dickens could get outside of himself he found plenty of occasion for astonishment at the change in social conditions, and admiration at the advance made in many directions. His experiences brought him many humorous encounters, and his kindliness of nature was more than once displayed in meeting individual instances of personal claims upon him. It was a delight, too, to receive the unaffected admiration of a whole people, and he bore testimony to the consideration for his comfort and privacy everywhere shown. He was fortunate also in the helpful companionship of the late J. R. Osgood, who had a genius for good-fellowship, and whose readiness and fertility of resources must have rendered him most serviceable. "Dolby and Osgood," Dickens wrote from Baltimore, "who do the most ridiculous things to keep me in spirits (I am often very heavy, and rarely sleep much), are determined to have a walking-match at Boston on the last day of February to celebrate the arrival of the day when I can say, 'next month!' for home." Dickens entered into the spirit of the jest, drew up articles of agreement, and afterward wrote a mock narrative of the match; and as this biographic story has almost unwittingly taken on a somewhat sombre hue as it draws near an end, we record the papers here as illustrative of the old Dickens, "the inimitable Boz."

"Articles of agreement entered into at Baltimore, in the United States of America, this third day of February in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-eight, between George Dolby, British subject, *alias* The Man [illegible] Ross, and James Ripley Osgood, an American [illegible] The Boston Bantam.

"Whereas, some Bounce having ar[illegible] men in reference to feats of ped[illegible]

have agreed to settle their differences and prove who is the better man, by means of a walking-match for two hats a side and the glory of their respective countries; and whereas, they agree that the said match shall come off, whatsoever the weather, on the Mill-Dam Road outside Boston, on Saturday, the 29th day of this present month; and whereas, they agree that the personal attendants on themselves during the whole walk, and also the umpires and starters and declarers of victory in the match, shall be James T. Fields of Boston, known in sporting circles as Massachusetts Jemmy, and Charles Dickens of Falstaff's Gad's Hill, whose surprising performances (without the least variation) on that truly national instrument, the American catarrh, have won for him the well-merited title of The Gad's Hill Gasper: —

"1. The men are to be started, on the day appointed, by Massachusetts Jemmy and The Gasper.

"2. Jemmy and The Gasper are, on some previous day, to walk out at the rate of not less than four miles an hour by The Gasper's watch, for one hour and a half. At the expiration of that one hour and a half they are to carefully note the place at which they halt. On the match's coming off they are to station themselves in the middle of the road, at that precise point, and the men (keeping clear of them and of each other) are to turn round them, right shoulder inward, and walk back to the starting-point. The man declared by them to pass the starting-point first is to be the victor and the winner of the match.

"3. No jostling or fouling allowed.

"4. All cautions or orders issued to the men by the umpires, starters, and declarers of victory to be considered final and admitting of no appeal.

"5. A sporting narrative of the match to be written by The Gasper within one week after its coming off, and the same to be duly printed (at the expense of the subscribers to these articles) on a broadside. The said broadside to be framed and glazed, and one copy of the same to be carefully preserved by each of the subscribers to these articles.

"6. The men to show on the evening of the day of walking, at six o'clock precisely, at the Parker House, Boston, when and where a dinner will be given them by The Gasper. The Gasper to occupy the chair, faced by Massachusetts Jemmy.

The latter promptly and formally to invite, as soon as may be after the date of these presents, the following guests to honour the said dinner with their presence; that is to say [here follow the names of a few of his friends, whom he wished to be invited].

"Now, lastly. In token of their accepting the trusts and offices by these articles conferred upon them, these articles are solemnly and formally signed by Massachusetts Jemmy and by The Gad's Hill Gasper, as well as by the men themselves.

"Signed by the Man of Ross, otherwise George Dolby.

"Signed by The Boston Bantam, otherwise James R. Osgood.

"Signed by Massachusetts Jemmy, otherwise James T. Fields.

"Signed by The Gad's Hill Gasper, otherwise Charles Dickens.

"Witness to the signatures, —— ——."

"THE SPORTING NARRATIVE

"THE MEN

"THE BOSTON BANTAM (*alias* Bright Chanticleer) is a young bird, though too old to be caught with chaff. He comes of a thorough game breed, and has a clear though modest crow. He pulls down the scale at ten stone and a half and add a pound or two. His previous performances in the pedestrian line have not been numerous. He once achieved a neat little match against time in two left boots at Philadelphia; but this must be considered as a pedestrian eccentricity, and cannot be accepted by the rigid chronicler as high art. The old mower with the scythe and hour-glass has not yet laid his mauley heavily on the Bantam's frontispiece, but he has had a grip at the Bantam's top feathers, and in plucking out a handful was very near making him like the great Napoleon Bonaparte (with the exception of the victualling department), when the ancient one found himself too much occupied to carry out the idea, and gave it up. The Man of Ross (*alias* old Alick Pope, *alias* Allourpraiseswhyshouldlords, etc.) is a [redacted] half too fleshy, and, if he accidentally

would do it to the tune of fourteen stone. This popular codger is of the rubicund and jovial sort, and has long been known as a piscatorial pedestrian on the banks of the Wye. But Izaak Walton had n't pace, — look at his book and you 'll find it slow, — and when that article comes in question, the fishing-rod may prove to some of his disciples a rod in pickle. Howbeit, the Man of Ross is a lively ambler, and has a smart stride of his own.

"THE TRAINING

"If vigorous attention to diet could have brought both men up to the post in tip-top feather, their condition would have left nothing to be desired. But both might have had more daily practice in the poetry of motion. Their breathings were confined to an occasional Baltimore burst under the guidance of The Gasper, and to an amicable toddle between themselves at Washington.

"THE COURSE

"Six miles and a half, good measure, from the first tree on the Mill-Dam Road, lies the little village (with no refreshments in it but five oranges and a bottle of blacking) of Newton Centre. Here Massachusetts Jemmy and The Gasper had established the turning-point. The road comprehended every variety of inconvenience to test the mettle of the men, and nearly the whole of it was covered with snow.

"THE START

was effected beautifully. The men taking their stand in exact line at the starting-post, the first tree aforesaid, received from The Gasper the warning, 'Are you ready?' and then the signal, 'One, two, three. Go!' They got away exactly together, and at a spinning speed, waited on by Massachusetts Jemmy and The Gasper.

"THE RACE

"In the teeth of an intensely cold and bitter wind, before which the snow flew fast and furious across the road from right to left, The Bantam slightly led. But The Man responded to

XIII

LAST YEARS

He returned to England the first week in May, 1868, and almost immediately made arrangements with his old agents, the Messrs. Chappell, for what he designed to be a final series of readings. It was characteristic of him that he should propose to reënforce the readings by adding the horrible scenes at the close of "Oliver Twist," for not only did he consider such a special feature in the reading desirable for the new fillip it would give, but it was evident that he himself craved a fresh excitement. But though he entered with spirit on these final readings and gloated over the effect which he produced by the murder-scene in "Oliver Twist," it became imperative that he should discontinue the readings, for his physicians regarded him as on the brink of paralysis.

He obeyed instantly, though with characteristic justice and generosity determined to make good the loss of the Messrs. Chappell by some readings later, which would not call for travel, and these he gave in the spring of 1870. He lived quietly at home and entertained many friends, especially from America. As the year wore on, he became more and more interested in his novel "Edwin Drood." He finished writing the first number in October. It was not to begin till April, 1870, but he measured his strength well, and knew that in this case he must be well in advance of the printer before it would be prudent to begin publication. He wrote, indeed, all that was published, before the serial had been running more than two or three months. He found it desirable for this purpose to seclude himself at Gadshill, though he went occasionally into society; he received a command from the Queen and waited on her at Buckingham Palace; he attended two public affairs, one a dinner for the Newsvenders' Charity and one a dinner of the Royal Academy, when he spoke touchingly of his old comrade Daniel Maclise, then recently dead.

tors were game to the backbone, doing what they did under such conditions, was evident to all; but to his gameness the courageous Bantam added unexpected endurance and (like the sailor's watch that did three hours to the cathedral clock's one) unexpected powers of going when wound up. The knowing eye could not fail to detect considerable disparity between the lads; Chanticleer being, as Mrs. Cratchit said of Tiny Tim, 'very light to carry,' and Rossius promising fair to attain the rotundity of the Anonymous Cove in the Epigram: —

> 'And when he walks the streets the paviors cry,
> "God bless you, sir!" — and lay their rammers by.'"

Dickens wound up the sport by giving a dinner afterward at the Parker House. The American tour was brought to a close by a complimentary dinner given to Dickens in New York, at which Horace Greeley presided. It was at this dinner that Dickens made his frank admission of the great changes which had taken place since his earlier visit, and his determination to place his admission on record in every copy published by him of "Martin Chuzzlewit" and "American Notes."

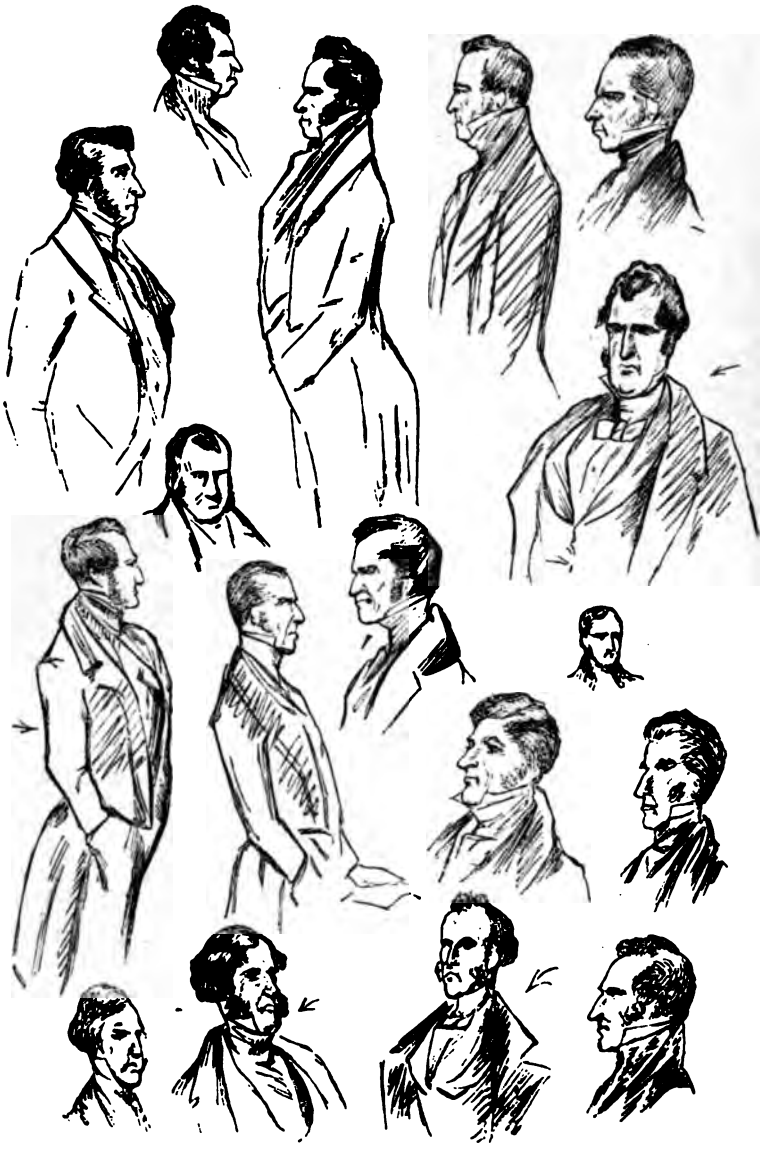
ILLUSTRATORS OF DICKENS'S WORKS

I

HABLOT KNIGHT BROWNE

THE first artist whose work was part and parcel with Dickens's work was H. K. Browne, who began his contribution with the fourth number of "Pickwick," in 1836, and continued to be associated with Dickens until 1859, when he furnished illustrations for "A Tale of Two Cities." He was three years younger than Dickens, being born July 12, 1815, at Kennington, London, so that he was twenty-one years old when he was selected by the rising humorist to take the place made vacant by the death of Seymour and the failure of Buss. He was educated at a private school in Norfolk, but showed so early a distinct aptitude for art that he was apprenticed by his family to Finden, an eminent engraver on steel. Browne was a quick, nervous draughtsman, and the slow execution of other people's designs or even his own was not at all to his taste, so that he did not follow the art which he had learned, but, when he set up for himself, took to etching and to water-color drawing. He pursued his studies at a life-school, though in after years he trusted to his memory and did not, as a rule at any rate, employ models when making his designs.

He made commendable progress early. When he was seventeen he earned a medal given by the Society of Arts for the best representation of an historical subject, and not long after received a prize from the same society for a large etching of John Gilpin, which intimated the bent of his genius. It may have been this print that led Dickens or his publishers, Chapman and Hall, to engage Browne to illustrate a little pamphlet which Dickens wrote, entitled "Sunday under Three Heads." It is to be observed that here Dickens took an assumed name, "Timothy Sparks," and Browne used his own initials, H. K. B.



W. H. Brown del.

Be this as it may, when Seymour, who was in a way the instigator of "Pickwick," died, and R. W. Buss proved unsatisfactory as an illustrator, there was need of a new designer who should follow the author and not be himself the draughtsman whose work gave the hint to the author. Two young men offered themselves, William Makepeace Thackeray and Hablot Knight Browne. The name Hablot, by the way, was from a Frenchman, a friend of the family, and the "t" is not sounded. Browne was the successful competitor, and Thackeray, who was his friend, brought him the good news, for good news it was, since the immense popularity of "Pickwick" introduced Browne to a large public as a book illustrator whose conceptions of the characters created by Dickens quickly became and remained the very portraits and figures of the multitudinous company.

In the first number of "Pickwick," which Browne illustrated, he signed himself "Nemo," but directly afterward adopted the *nom de crayon* "Phiz," which became identified with him, and which he retained long after Dickens dropped his sobriquet "Boz," which most probably had given rise to the form Browne took. He was exceedingly fertile and very quick to catch ideas, and it was well for him that he was so, for Dickens made sudden demands upon him. He would rush in upon the young artist, read him a scene, say, "Now I want you to illustrate that," and be off with his manuscript, leaving him to remember as he could and suit his work to the need. How much pains he took and how versatile he was may be seen by the twenty-nine sketches that he made when he was trying to meet Dickens's wishes with regard to the appearance of Mr. Dombey.

Dickens found Browne a good companion, and when they were in the midst of "Pickwick" took him off with Mrs. Dickens for a ten days' holiday in Belgium; and in February, 1838, had him for a companion when he went into Yorkshire during his preparation for "Nicholas Nickleby," and later on a holiday excursion in November of the same year. Browne's congenial fellowship is evidenced by a sentence in one of Dickens's letters at this time to his wife: "We were at the play last night. It was a bespeak — 'The Love Chase,' a ballet (with a phenomenon!), divers songs, and 'A Roland for an Oliver.' It is a good theatre, but the actors are very funny. Browne

'09 MR BOMBEY

laughed with such indecent heartiness at one point of the entertainment that an old gentleman in the next box suffered the most violent indignation." But later, he came to dislike publicity and was very hard to capture for any social occasion. He withdrew himself when he married into the country, and Mr. Kitton, from whose brief memoir[1] most of these facts are taken, says: "Dickens even had considerable difficulty in occasionally persuading him to meet a few friends and spend a pleasant evening. When he did accept such invitations, he invariably tried to seclude himself in the corner of a room, or behind a curtain. His desire for a quiet, unobtrusive life induced him to pass most of his time in country retirement, all business matters in town being transacted by an intimate friend. Authors or publishers wishing to have a personal interview with 'Phiz' were compelled to visit him at his residence, a few miles from town, and many were the *contretemps* on dark nights as they crossed a bleak moor to reach their destination."

He enjoyed most, apparently, his water-color work; he was at home in hunting-scenes and in seaside views, and made many travel sketches, as well as larger, bolder subjects, not fearing important historical imaginative works, such as "A Foraging Party of Cæsar's Forces surprised by the Britons;" but his humorous designs for "Pickwick" are undoubtedly the pictures which will keep his memory green, and he made at one time an entire series of water-color copies of all his illustrations to Dickens's novels, in execution of a commission given by an enthusiastic collector.

A slight attack of paralysis at last crippled his powers, and the rise of new men and new styles caused him to retire from the front, though he never gave over his great industry. His son writes of him: "He never understood the art of husbanding or developing his powers, — he never set to work to learn any technical process; when he had a little leisure from 'illustration' work, he used to start a picture, to get his hand in, generally taking some unimportant or trivial subject for this purpose. His facility of hand both in large and minute work was something marvellous. At one time he produced a

[1] *Phiz (Hablot K. Browne): A Memoir, including a Selection from his Correspondence, and Notes on his Principal Works.* By FRED G. KITTON. With a Portrait and Numerous Illustrations. London: W. Satchell & Co., 1882.

very remarkable series of sketches in chalk made during a tour in Ireland. They are scattered now, but are as fine as anything he did, and are certainly the best records of a people who have practically vanished. He was astonishingly careless about his work. Hundreds of original designs were thrown into the waste-basket; apart from their local interest similar sketches have found willing purchasers of late years."

He received a pension in his declining years, and died July 8, 1882, at Hone, near Brighton, where he had spent his last years. He left four sons, one of whom inherited his father's taste, if not his father's power.

II

GEORGE CRUIKSHANK

WHEN Dickens was beginning his career Cruikshank had for nearly forty years been before the British public, and the great illustrator survived the great novelist eight years. There was one marked characteristic common to both men. They had an intense interest in the twisted forms of humanity and a warm desire to make their work contribute definitely to the setting the crooked straight. But each was of too marked an individuality, and pushed his methods too independently, to permit a great deal of common action. The illustrator need not be simply an interpreter of the writer, but he can scarcely assert his own conceptions of the writer's genius to the subordination of the writer, and Dickens and Cruikshank, therefore, though they worked together in "Sketches by Boz" and "Oliver Twist," did not persevere in their partnership, and the reason lay largely in the strong, even wilful, independence of each.

The character of Dickens has been portrayed in the sketch of his life. It is worth while to give some details of the life of a man who is associated in the minds of most with Dickens in a very enduring fashion, and will continue so to be, not so much from their formal relations to each other as from the community of their purposes, since while one was sweeping a vast horde of men and women into his net of caricature, yet was never losing sight of certain moral purposes, so the other through a much longer career was using his pencil in the same direction of forcible satire, having a like very definite purpose of making his art serve a moral end.

It was a long career indeed that George Cruikshank had, and a career crowded with a multitude of energetic works. His life stretched from September 27, 1792, to February 1, 1878, and inasmuch as his first exhibited drawing was dated 1799 and he designed and etched the frontispiece to a fairy tale in 1875, it would be straining a point but little to say that his career as

an artist was coterminous with his life. His father, an Edinburgh man, and his mother from Perth were living in London when George was born, and in London he lived the rest of his life, a day at Boulogne constituting all his experience of the Continent. He followed his father's pursuit. Isaac Cruikshank worked at etchings which his wife colored, and the two boys, for George had an elder brother Robert, were pressed into service as soon as they could manage the tools of the art. The theatrical portraits which the establishment turned out threw the boys in the way of the stage, and in his early years George was strongly inclined to take up an actor's life, like Dickens, and like Dickens also was an ardent amateur actor, both men playing in the same company, as one can see who reads Dickens's amusing unfinished skit of Mrs. Gamp's account of her fellow-travellers.[1] He was also an enthusiastic lover of the military life, and used to regret that he had not entered the army. In his own account of his early recollections[2] he says: "I had acquired as a child almost all the discipline necessary for an infantry soldier, completing when a youth this part of my military education by serving as a volunteer. This early acquaintance with soldiering led me to study the sword exercise; and understanding the small sword, and the broadsword as well, and the use of firearms, I consider myself able (with a properly trained horse) to mount at a moment's notice, to act as an irregular cavalryman; and having paid some attention to gunnery on land, and attended the gunnery practice on board Her Majesty's ship The Excellent, in Portsmouth Harbor, I could lend a hand to work a gun afloat, or, of course, as Horse Marine, or, if ashore, as an artilleryman." All this in attestation of his parenthetical observation that he was quite capable of taking command of the British forces. The self-confidence which peeps amusingly out of these recollections was a substantial part of Cruikshank's equipment, and it may well have been cultivated by his early application to work, his energetic devotion to his art, and the success he won, but it was after all an inherent constituent in his vital, superabundantly active personality.

He had small chance for idling, or, more strictly, he refused

[1] See volume xxviii., *Plays, Poems, and Miscellanies*, p. xi.

[2] *A Popgun fired off by George Cruikshank, in defence of the British Volunteers of 1803, against the Uncivil Attack upon that Body by General W. Napier.*

to take up idling ways like his brother Robert, and throughout his teens was kept hard at work mastering the rudiments of his art by immediately and constantly occupying himself with his art. Upon the death of Gillray the Cruikshanks had the field of caricature to themselves. After Isaac Cruikshank had died, the brothers carried on the shop together. Then Robert married and devoted himself more especially to portrait painting, and George went to live with his mother and sister in Pentonville and continued to live in the same neighborhood after his marriage. His work at first, as intimated, was largely in caricature prints, but it was the result of close observation. He walked the streets of London when a boy and young man, as Dickens did after him, observing keenly and remembering accurately. He was indeed in his prints in these early years doing with his pencil and etching-needle what many a newspaper reporter nowadays seeks to do with his stylographic pen, but his reporting was always touched with certain permanent qualities, wit, humor, satire, sometimes a shaft of light sent into some dark place.

He found his best opportunity in his early political work in connection with Hone, who as a writer had the virtue and the defects of a radical reformer. He issued pamphlets and tracts aimed at the government and at abuses, and he had the discernment to see that such pictures as George Cruikshank could draw would add speed and force to his own winged words. Upwards of a hundred thousand copies were sold of "The House that Jack Built," with thirteen cuts after designs by Cruikshank. The squib was a parody on the nursery rhyme aimed at the ministry of the day in which were Canning and Castlereagh. A still more famous proceeding was Cruikshank's design of a bank-note not to be imitated, aimed at the terrible statute which ordered the punishment of death for passing forged one-pound notes of the Bank of England. Cruikshank, who had a vivid imagination when his own work was concerned, maintained that his etching repealed the law.

This was in 1821, and about the same time Cruikshank was beginning to widen the scope of his work, and by his book illustrations to take his place as much more than a political caricaturist, as one who had seen into life and was reproducing it with a fine sense of its artistic value. His "Life in London" and his "Tom and Jerry" early made him known on this side,

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and his work for the next twenty years drew from Thackeray that admirable "Essay on the Genius of George Cruikshank," published in 1840, which has a great value, since its author could read in Cruikshank's art what he was vainly attempting to express in his own pictures.

The date of this essay is shortly after that of the brief connection which Cruikshank had with Dickens. In the introduction to "Oliver Twist" the reader will find succinctly set forth the relation which Cruikshank's art bore to that work, and it is needless to repeat here the easily refuted story of Cruikshank's paramount importance in the design. As intimated before, Cruikshank, with all his genius, was too much in the way when Dickens wished to enforce his own conceptions, and the two men parted as partners though they kept up a most friendly intercourse through life.

A very good illustration of the perversion of Cruikshank's intellect, while his art was steadfast, may be seen in the extraordinary volume of Fairy Tales, in which he revised the familiar tales of our childhood so as to make them teach the evils of intemperance, and yet drew for them some of the most exquisite and truthful pictures imaginable. It matters little that Cruikshank should have distorted the tales when he could draw for us such a portrait of Hop o' my Thumb, and as a matter of fact his designs remain, precious forever, but his text has become a mere curiosity. Dickens had his good-natured fling at this text in his paper, "Frauds on the Fairies."[1]

It is not the purpose here to make a rounded account of Cruikshank's work; it is enough to relate the bearing which his design had on Dickens's art, and to hint why, with all the common property which the two men had in the world in which they lived, they shared it in friendship rather than in work.

[1] Vol. xxviii. p. 488.

III

GEORGE CATTERMOLE

THE affectionate manner in which Dickens addressed George Cattermole, in his letters, intimates the very friendly relation which subsisted between the two men, a relation which owed some of its cordiality at the outset to the fact that Miss Clarissa Hester Elderton, whom Cattermole married, was a distant connection of Dickens. The acquaintance between the two men seems to have begun before the marriage of Cattermole, in 1839, and to have ripened into warm friendship during 1840, when Cattermole was engaged in making illustrations for "Master Humphrey's Clock," and especially for that portion of the serial which was devoted to "The Old Curiosity Shop." For this and for "Barnaby Rudge" Cattermole did all the designs.

When he made the acquaintance of Dickens, George Cattermole had already won distinction as a water-color artist, though his work had been principally in the direction of architectural drawing. He was by a dozen years the senior of Dickens, for he was born at Dickleborough, near Diss, Norfolk, August 8, 1800. Unlike many artists he had not to struggle from childhood. His father was a gentleman of independent means, and himself trained the boy, who was the youngest of a large family; recognizing his aptitude for art he placed him, along with a brother Richard, when fourteen years of age, with John Britton the antiquary, and George made some drawings for Britton's "Cathedral Antiquities of England." In 1822 he became associate exhibitor, and in 1833 full member of the [Royal] Society of Painters in Water-Colors. His paintings at these exhibitions, which brought him into notice, included "Sir Walter Raleigh witnessing the Earl of Essex in the Tower," "Hamilton of Bothwellhaugh preparing to shoot the Regent Murray in 1570," "Benvenuto Cellini defending the Castle of St. Angelo," — subjects which intimate the turn of his mind, and the strong interest which he felt in the romantic

movement in literature and art, exemplified by writers like Walter Scott and painters like Delacroix. His painting drew from Ruskin the remark in "Modern Painters," "The antiquarian feeling of Cattermole is pure, earnest, and natural, and I think his imagination originally vigorous; certainly his fancy, his grasp of momentary passion, considerable; his sense of action in the human body, vivid and ready."

At the same time Cattermole was in demand as a book illustrator, and, before illustrating "Master Humphrey's Clock," he had made drawings of buildings and scenery used by Scott in his novels, for a finely illustrated "Scott and Scotland," and had made the designs for Thomas Roscoe's "Wanderings and Excursions in North Wales." Afterward his name was given to "Cattermole's Historical Annual," in which the steel engravings were after his designs; and to "Cattermole's Portfolio of Original Drawings," which contained twenty plates executed in lithotint, a process which he had brought to perfection in company with J. D. Harding. He contributed illustrations also to S. C. Hall's "Baronial Halls of England."

He refused two honors, — somewhat of an indication of his consequence and his independence. In 1839 he received an offer of knighthood, which he declined, and about 1850 he would not consent to stand for the presidency of the Water-Color Society. He was a great favorite by reason of his vivacity and good fellowship, and the letters addressed to him by Dickens hint at this liveliness. He was one of the amateur actors associated with Dickens, and his fun was antiphonal to the great humorist's. He received one of the two grand médailles d'honneur awarded to English artists at the French International Exhibition of 1855, Sir Edwin Landseer taking the other. He died July 24, 1868, leaving among other children a son, Leonardo Cattermole, who has won distinction as a painter of horses.

IV

DANIEL MACLISE

THE most significant association of Maclise with Dickens lies in the masterly portrait of the novelist of which Thackeray has said, "We have here the real identical man, Dickens, the inward as well as the outward of him." He designed also some of the frontispieces to the Christmas books, but these, like the portrait, were rather the result of his great friendship with Dickens than to be taken as commercial enterprises. For in his own art he occupied a commanding place, and that art was historical painting.

He was almost an exact contemporary of Dickens, for he was born but a few months before him, if we may take his own statement, which, however, has been doubted, that he was born January 25, 1811, and he died but a few weeks before Dickens, April 25, 1870. Forster made him known to Dickens very soon after he himself had formed Dickens's acquaintance. At this time Maclise had made his most distinct impression upon the public by the series of character portraits which he produced for "Fraser's Magazine" during the eight years from 1830 to 1838. The collection was published by itself in 1871 as the "Maclise Portrait Gallery," and includes such personages as Wordsworth, Lamb, Coleridge, Scott, Thackeray, Carlyle, Leigh Hunt, Lockhart, Sydney Smith, the Countess of Blessington, Mrs. Norton, Miss Martineau, Rogers, Count D'Orsay, the Disraelis, and in all some fourscore persons of note. Indeed it is to be remarked that Maclise or the projector had a keen prophetic insight, for many persons are included whose fame had by no means reached its height when their portraits were thus taken.

Maclise was of Scottish birth. His father wrote his name McLish, and was at the time of Daniel's birth living in Cork, Ireland, where his boy lived until 1827, getting his schooling, and showing signs of his genius by a spirited sketch of Sir

Walter Scott, which was published, and by his illustrations for Croker's "Fairy Legends and Traditions of the South of Ireland." He made his own way, in spite of the generous offer of friends, and entered the Academy schools in London in 1828, determined to qualify himself for his art by the best training he could secure. Meanwhile his handsome face, his distinguished bearing, and his rollicking humor had won him friends, and he was one of the little party — Dickens, Forster, and Stanfield being the others — that visited Cornwall in 1842. One result of his trip was a large painting, "Waterfall at St. Wighton's Kieve near Tintagel, Cornwall," into which he introduced as a figure one of Dickens's daughters.

Maclise's fame rests, however, chiefly on his great historical paintings. In July, 1857, he offered to devote his time and strength to the decoration of the royal gallery in the House of Lords, and laid out his work on a great scale. Discouraged, however, by the conditions under which he was working, he did not complete his designs in fresco, but there are to be seen, as results of the commission then given him, his great cartoon, "Wellington and Blücher at Waterloo," his "The Death of Nelson," and some smaller oil paintings representing "Elizabeth at Tilbury," "Blake at Tunis," and "Marlborough at Blenheim." He died April 25, 1870, and Dickens, at an Academy dinner on the day of Maclise's burial, used these words of his old comrade: "The gentlest and most modest of men, the freest as to his generous appreciation of young aspirants, and the frankest and largest hearted as to his peers, incapable of a sordid or ignoble thought, gallantly sustaining the true dignity of his vocation, without a grain of self-assertion, wholesomely natural at the last as at the first, 'in wit a man, simplicity a child,' no artist of whatsoever denomination, I make bold to say, ever went to his rest having a golden memory more free from dross, or having devoted himself with a truer chivalry to the art goddess he served."

VI

JOHN LEECH

Two men, contemporaries of Dickens, friends and illustrators of his works, were especially identified with "Punch," — Richard Doyle and John Leech. The former broke away from the paper when it was aggressively anti-Roman Catholic, but Leech kept his connection throughout his life. He was seven years older than Doyle, having been born in London, August 29, 1817, and he was almost in at the birth of "Punch," for he began his contributions in the fourth number, and for nearly a quarter of a century was the mainstay of the periodical. He drew from it a generous living, for he is said to have made for it some three thousand drawings, and to have received forty thousand pounds from it during his connection with it, a connection which continued until his death, October 29, 1864. A large part of his work in "Punch" is preserved in his goodly quarto volume of "Pictures of Life and Character." Aside from "Punch" he was in great demand as an illustrator, and in some instances, as in the several comic histories, indulged himself in colored illustrations.

It is amusing, when one considers how abundantly Leech illustrated hunting-scenes, to be told by Dean Hole that he was a timid rider, and loved a placid steed. "Give me an animal," he would say, "on which you can carry an umbrella in a hailstorm." The same writer draws Leech's portrait in these words: "As to his appearance, it might be said of him, as Sterne said of Uncle Toby, that 'Nature had written Gentleman, with so fair a hand, on every line of his countenance,' and that, as Lord Peterborough said of Fénelon, he was 'cast in a particular mould, never used for anybody else.' . . . He was tall but slight in figure, with a high, broad forehead, large, blue-grey Irish eyes (his family came originally from Ireland), and a face full of expression. When he said anything which he disliked, when he was bored or vexed, there was 'a lurking tremble of the nether lip,' but the sunniest of

smiles when he was enjoying the ridiculous, or giving pleasure to his friends. He was modest in his demeanour, and silent as a rule, as one who, though he was not working, was constrained to think about his work. He dressed tastefully but quietly, like a gentleman, and was one of those who believed that cleanliness is next to godliness."

Leech was, as one could readily believe, a very close observer in all his walks and rambles, and made much use of memoranda, whipping out his sketch-book on a sudden to make an outline of some face or scene which he wished to preserve. But he carefully avoided the reproduction of likenesses which could be recognized, except when he was drawing the faces and figures of public men for political cartoons. The constant pressure upon him by the demands of a weekly journal led him at times to revolt from the constraint. "There is always," he would say plaintively, "a boy from the 'Punch' office, diffusing an odour of damp corduroy through the house, and waiting for fresh supplies." The delicacy of his work, even though he knew well the limitations of the engraver, was a steady witness to the respect which he paid his art.

Like Doyle, Leech is represented in Dickens's Christmas books, but the reader of the letters of Dickens will perceive how much closer was the personal intimacy of the two men than their literary and artistic partnership. Leech was one of the merry company of actors, and like Mark Lemon, the editor of "Punch," was constantly in Dickens's society. They made journeys together for vacation pleasure, but unfortunately the editors of Dickens's letters were unable to procure any which he had written to Leech.

Leech, though he showed early a faculty for drawing, was sent, after he had been at the Charterhouse, to St. Bartholomew's to study medicine, but his native taste was too strong and family circumstances finally too precarious to keep him from his destiny, and for a half a dozen years before "Punch" was established he made many ventures and some successful hits. After "Punch" was well under way, his fortune was secure. He married in the early tide of his success Miss Ann Eaton, and had two children, a daughter and a son, the latter of whom gave good promise of following well in his father's steps, but was drowned at South Adelaide in 1876.

Mr. Austin Dobson, in an appreciative sketch of Leech, well

says: "He comes, for practical purposes, between Cruikshank and Du Maurier, and in that order plays an indispensable part in the progressive transformation of humorous art from the broad brutalities of the earlier men to the gentler and more subdued satire now in vogue. As Cruikshank refines upon Gillray and Rowlandson, so Leech refines upon Cruikshank, but to a much greater extent. His humor is to the full as keen, his sense of fun as marked; but it is less grotesque, less boisterous, less exaggerated, nearer to truth and ordinary experience."

VI

FREDERICK WALKER

READERS of "Trilby" do not need to be reminded how affectionately the author writes of F. Walker, and indeed many have thought that in the character of Little Billee, Du Maurier has thinly veiled the real personality of Walker. Although he is represented but twice in this edition of Dickens, he is in himself so winning a figure that it seems worth while to trace briefly his brief career.

He was born in Marylebone, May 26, 1840. Like many artists he came of artistic parentage. His father was a designer of artistic jewelry, with a taste also for painting which he may have inherited in turn from his father, who painted portraits. When a schoolboy Frederick Walker was following his bent in drawing at the British Museum, and so profoundly was he impressed by the Elgin Marbles that, besides devoting many days to their study through copying, he caused casts of them to be hung in his studio where he might constantly have them for inspiration. There was a marked individuality about him from the first which led him to be impatient of the conventionalities of British art.

In March, 1858, he was admitted as a student at the Royal Academy, where he continued to occupy himself with the antique, but it was not till 1863 that he made a visit to Paris. In 1868 he visited Venice. About 1873 he went for his health to Algiers, and he died at St. Fillans, Perthshire, in June, 1875. His work thus, which reaches from 1860 to 1875, was noticeably free from other influence than that of his English surroundings and his studies from the antique. It was recognized early for its freshness and its quality of beauty, and both in his paintings exhibited by the Water-Colour Society, and in his abundant book work, he made a distinct impression upon his fellow artists as well as upon the discriminating public. Had he lived longer and enjoyed a robustness of health which

never was his fortune, there can be little doubt that he would have been a real force in English art.

At the outset of his career Tom Taylor describes him as "a nervous, timid, sensitive young fellow, frail and small of body, feverish of temperament, but ever prompt and bright of wit." He made his début in "Once a Week," and had been drawing for it a few months when he was introduced to Thackeray, then editing the "Cornhill Magazine," and was given the opportunity of illustrating "Philip," first as the elaborator of Thackeray's sketches, and then as an independent designer. This gave him a first-rate start, and he afterward illustrated "Denis Duval," as well as Miss Thackeray's tales. He became interested in his designs for books, and more than once used them as studies for water-color drawings in which he had greater freedom of execution.

Of his larger works there are a few which stand out with special distinctness, "The Old Gate," "The Plough," "The Harbor of Refuge," "The Vagrants," "The Wayfarers;" and both in choice of subject and in treatment, he seems to have been influenced by the same considerations which were affecting the Barbizon painters, though it cannot be said that the works of Jules Breton or J. F. Millet were specific exemplars for him. The direction which he was taking, however, and the results he had already reached parallel with their work, make one feel keenly that like them he might well have given a new turn to English painting. One cannot read the literary history and criticism of English art since Walker without perceiving how much of a figure he is to his contemporaries.

VII

FRANK STONE AND MARCUS STONE

It is interesting to observe that Dickens in the course of his career as a novelist spanned two generations of artists, for he was a warm friend of Frank Stone, to whom he was indebted for an illustration to "The Haunted Man," and he encouraged Frank Stone's son, Marcus, to whom he intrusted the illustrations for "Our Mutual Friend."

Frank Stone, the son of a cotton-spinner in Manchester, was born August 22, 1800, and was in a fair way of succeeding in business when at twenty-four years of age he abandoned mercantile pursuits in order to devote himself to painting. The ranks of English book illustrators have been recruited largely from the painters in water-color, and this was the case with Stone who, although he began in Manchester as a painter of portraits in oil, turned, when he went to London in 1831, chiefly to water-colors. He never was a successful man in the sense of making an abundant living by his work, and the character of his subjects gave them a somewhat ephemeral life, but his personality was very engaging and he became the warm friend of many of the men of letters of his day. Thackeray, Campbell, Rogers, all knew and liked him, but his connection with Dickens was especially close. He lived at one time in Tavistock House, Tavistock Square, and was succeeded in residence there by Dickens.

The amateur theatricals brought them constantly into each other's society. Sairey Gamp in her description of the members of the company characterizes Stone as a "fine-looking, portly gentleman, with a face like a amiable full moon." One of his successful parts was Mr. Nightingale in Dickens's farce, "Mr. Nightingale's Diary." On another occasion Dickens conceived a very amusing character to be assumed by Stone. "I have got," he writes, "a capital part for you in the farce, not a difficult one for you to learn, as you never say anything but 'Yes' and 'No.' You are called in the *dramatis personæ*

an able-bodied British seaman, and you are never seen by mortal eye to do anything (except inopportunely producing a mop) but stand about the deck of the boat in everybody's way, with your hair immensely tousled, one brace on, your hands in your pockets, and the bottoms of your trousers tucked up. Yet you are inextricably connected with the plot, and are the man whom everybody is inquiring after. I think it is a very whimsical idea and extremely droll. It made me laugh heartily when I jotted it all down yesterday."

For some reason Stone abandoned the Water-Colour Society and returned to oil. His pictures had been engraved and were of a popular character, but shortly before his death he began to make marked progress in his art. Dickens secured for him a house on the St. Omer Road near Boulogne, and he made some admirable studies among the fisher-folk in the neighborhood. It was in 1853 that he was first living there, and he had just made plans for a renewed residence six years later when he died, November 18, 1859. His widow outlived him thirty years. His son Marcus, who was born July 4, 1840, exhibited his first picture, "Rest," at the Royal Academy in 1858, was elected A. R. A. in 1877, and is still (1894) living.

VIII

FELIX OCTAVIUS CARR DARLEY

When the Household Edition of Dickens's works was projected thirty years ago — an edition which was in a way the progenitor of the present one — the most eminent and successful character draughtsman in America was found in Mr. Darley. It was proposed that he and Mr., afterward Sir John, Gilbert should unite in making a series of designs, one for each of a long row of well proportioned, pretty volumes. It ended in Gilbert's doing a very few, and Darley doing the remainder. Many of Darley's original India-ink drawings are in possession of Mr. H. O. Houghton, who printed the edition at the Riverside Press, and, when he formed a publishing partnership with Mr. Hurd, published the works. These designs were engraved on steel by Mr. Joseph Andrews, a most skillful engraver, and formed a very conspicuous feature of the new Dickens. They reappear in this edition, and justify the choice made in the first instance. They are also of interest as fixing an intelligent American conception of the characters drawn by Dickens; and it will be observed how instinctively Darley avoids the extravagant and grotesque. It is perhaps not too much to say that no one, conversant chiefly with types of American faces, would be likely to fall upon such expressions as Browne and Cruikshank, or even Leech and Doyle, indulged in; it is in England that one receives suggestions which would lead to these forms.

The series of pictures which probably led especially to the engagement of Darley for the illustration of Dickens, was that which accompanied a library edition of Cooper's novels which had just been published. Darley furnished more than five hundred designs for that publication, and he was employed also to illustrate a companion undertaking in an edition of William Gilmore Simms's novels. The former work, and we think the latter also, called for drawings of Indians; and it is said that Darley was as little acquainted with the actual Indian as Long-

fellow was with Acadie and the banks of the Mississippi when he wrote "Evangeline."

Darley knew at least one Englishman well, for his father, John Darley, was an actor, born in England in 1765, who died in Philadelphia in 1853, when his son was thirty-one years old. The elder Darley, who interrupted his histrionic career, which was mainly pursued in this country, by serving for a while as lieutenant of marines in the United States Navy, is described as having a manly, well-proportioned person and handsome face. For a brief description this serves well for his son Felix, who in his maturity impressed one as a singularly fine-looking man. He was born in Philadelphia, June 23, 1822, and, like many other artists, came to his own through an irrepressible native gift which he employed in his leisure hours, and in all escapes from the commercial business in which he was placed when fourteen years old. He found a market for some humorous sketches, and was sufficiently encouraged by the liberal payment he received from the "Saturday Museum" to devote himself more exclusively to drawing.

For a while he remained in Philadelphia, which was then, relatively, a more important publishing centre than now, and worked for the houses there. His bent was always humorous, and he was employed on a popular library of humorous American works; but though the humor which he illustrated was much of it of a somewhat farcical order, his native refinement and his love of beauty were a preservative against anything in the way of vulgarity, and his pencil usually kept on a somewhat different plane from that occupied by the pen of the men for whom he furnished an accompaniment.

It was a further indication of the good taste which controlled his humor that he was engaged to illustrate Irving's writings, and removed to New York, where, in 1852, he was elected a member of the Academy of Design. The American Art Union, which was a company half mercantile and half artistic, and enthusiastically bent on encouraging popular art, engaged him to execute outline drawings of "Rip Van Winkle" and "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow." These illustrations, issued in a form sumptuous at that time, seemed to continue the traditions of Retzch, and to recall something of the sculpturesqueness, though not the austerity, of Flaxman, and they did much to give a peculiar distinction to Darley's reputation. He was

offered the opportunity of settling in London, but wisely remained at home.

Steel engraving and lithography held a rank at this time in America somewhat in advance of wood engraving. Part of the commercial success of steel engraving was due to the fact that photography had scarcely begun to supply large prints for the decoration of walls, so that engravings on steel were the accredited form of pictures in houses where art was cultivated in a modest way; at the same time the expansion of banks as the country extended, and the formation of all manner of companies for exploiting money-making schemes, led to great activity both in lithography and steel-plate engraving. In this latter industry Darley was in great demand. He made a great many vignettes for bank-notes and other certificates, and acquired a vogue among those who had the management of such affairs. His public reputation rested, however, aside from the books he illustrated, on large prints such as "Emigrants attacked by Indians on the Prairie," "The Village Blacksmith," "The Unwilling Laborer," "The Repose," "The Wedding Procession" in Longfellow's "The Courtship of Miles Standish," and "Washington's Entry into New York." Later he continued a similar series of works in subjects drawn from the war for the Union, as "Cavalry Charge at Fredericksburg," and "Sherman's March to the Sea."

Yet though he had a taste for considerable compositions, and indeed by the nature of his gift was more of a composer than a sketcher, he employed his art most abundantly in book illustration. Not only did he draw small pictures for a great variety of books, but he was given to groups of pictures which were rather accompaniments of books than simply illustrations of them. Thus, early in his career he made a series of outline drawings for Judd's "Margaret" which were published independently of the book, and later he made a successful series illustrative of Longfellow's "Evangeline" which has had a long life with the public, one form of publication following another. So he illustrated Hawthorne and Shakespeare in similar fashion, but his genius was rather more in sympathy with Longfellow's undramatic and lyrical quality.

Toward the close of the war he visited Europe and brought back with him a portfolio full of sketches and a notebook in which were many good-humored comments on his experience.

"Sketches Abroad with Pen and Pencil" was the result and is an admirable illustration of the genial nature of the artist. He drew with a clear sense of what was required of a draughtsman on wood, and was probably the last and greatest of the old school that gave way before the application of photography and chemistry, by which painters and draughtsmen in black and white, or water-colorists, were able to reproduce their works without first drawing them on the boxwood or employing some one else to do this.

Darley continued to occupy himself with his art up to the end of his life, but withdrew in his latter years from the cities to his home at Clayton, Delaware, where he died March 27, 1888.

IX

SOL EYTINGE

In the Dickens Dictionary, which forms the final volume of this series, the illustrations are all from designs by Sol Eytinge, which appeared originally as woodcuts in the Diamond Edition of Dickens's works, published in this country by Fields, Osgood & Co., when they became publishers for Dickens in connection with his second visit and readings. They constitute the second considerable interpretation of Dickens by an American artist, and received from Mr. Dickens these words of recognition: "They are remarkable for a delicate perception of beauty, a lively eye for character, a most agreeable absence of exaggeration, and a general modesty and propriety, which I greatly like."

Mr. Eytinge was born in New York city October 23, 1833, and began to draw at a very early age. For forty years he has been a most industrious illustrator of books, papers, and magazines. Like Darley he has also done much work for bank-note engravers. For a long time he was connected with Harper and Brothers, but upon the establishment of "Every Saturday" by Fields, Osgood & Co., in Boston, he became the chief artist of that paper, and contributed to it among other important illustrations the great double-page picture, "Mr. Pickwick's Reception," in which the leading characters in Dickens's works were represented, a picture which in reduced form is given in the Dictionary.

In the summer of 1869 Mr. Eytinge paid a visit to Mr. Dickens, in company with Mr. Lowell and Mr. Fields, and on that occasion, as Mr. Fields relates in his "Yesterdays with Authors," he was one of the party that explored some of the dark recesses of London with Mr. Dickens and a detective. Mr. Eytinge has for several years past lived in retirement on account of ill health, and has only now and then made designs. Those who knew Mr. Eytinge in his prime recall a singularly handsome man, with finely formed features, dark blue eyes, golden hair, and exquisitely formed hands.

LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS

I. HENRY AUSTIN [1]

FURNIVAL'S INN, Wednesday Night, past 12 [1833 or 1834].

DEAR HENRY, — I have just been ordered [2] on a journey, the length of which is at present uncertain. I may be back on Sunday very probably, and start again on the following day. Should this be the case, you shall hear from me before.

Don't laugh. I am going (alone) in a gig; and, to quote the eloquent inducement which the proprietors of Hampstead *chays* hold out to Sunday riders, "the gen'l'm'n drives himself." I am going into Essex and Suffolk. It strikes me I shall be spilt before I pay a turnpike. I have a presentiment I shall run over an only child before I reach Chelmsford, my first stage.

Let the evident haste of this specimen of "The Polite Letter-Writer" be its excuse, and

Believe me, dear Henry, most sincerely yours,

II. EDITOR OF "THE MORNING CHRONICLE"

Tuesday Morning [May, 1835].

The conclusion of Russell's [3] dinner will be forwarded by Cooper's company's coach, which leaves here at half-past six to-morrow morning. The report of the Bath dinner shall be forwarded by the first Bath coach on Thursday morning —

[1] An early friend, who later married Dickens's sister Letitia.

[2] By *The Morning Chronicle*.

[3] Lord John Russell, who was then seeking re-election at the hands of a Devonshire constituency.

what time it starts we have no means of ascertaining till we reach Bath; but you will receive it as early as possible, as we will indorse the parcel "Pay the porter 2*s.* 6*d.* extra for immediate delivery." Beard [1] will go over to Bath from here to-morrow morning, and I shall come back by the mail from Marlborough. I need not say that it will be sharp work, and will require two of us; for we shall both be up the whole of the previous night, and shall have to sit up all night again to get it off in time.

As soon as we have had a little sleep, we shall return to town as quickly as we *can*, for we have (if the express succeeds) to stop at two or three places along the road, to pay money and express satisfaction. You may imagine that we are extremely anxious to know the result of the arrangement. Pray direct to one of us at the "White Hart," Bath, and inform us, in a parcel *sent by the* FIRST COACH *after you receive this*, exactly at *what hour* it arrived. Do not fail on any account.

We joined with the "Herald" (I say this in reference to the first part of your letter) precisely on the principle you at first laid down — economy; not pushed so far, however, as to interfere with the efficiency of the express. As the conclusion of the dinner was to be done, we all thought the best plan we could pursue would be to leave two men behind, and trust Russell to the others. I have no doubt, if he makes a speech of any ordinary dimensions, it can be done by the time we reach Marlborough; and taking into consideration the immense importance of having the addition of saddle-horses from thence, it is beyond all doubt worth an effort. Believe me (for self and Beard), Very sincerely yours,

CHARLES DICKENS.

III. CATHERINE HOGARTH

Sunday Evening [May (?) 1836].

I have at this moment got Pickwick and his friends on the Rochester coach, and they are going on swimmingly, in company with a very different character from any I have yet described, who I flatter myself will make a decided hit.[2] I want to get them from the ball to the inn before I go to bed; and I think that will take me until one or two o'clock at the

[1] Thomas Beard, a fellow-reporter. [2] Alfred Jingle.

earliest. The publishers will be here in the morning, so you will readily suppose I have no alternative but to stick at my desk. . . .

IV. JOHN HULLAH

FURNIVAL'S INN, Sunday Evening [1836 (?)].

MY DEAR HULLAH, — Have you seen "The Examiner"? It is rather depreciatory of the opera; [1] but, like all inveterate critiques against Braham, so well done that I cannot help laughing at it, for the life and soul of me. I have seen "The Sunday Times," "The Dispatch," and "The Satirist," all of which blow their critic trumpets against unhappy me most lustily. Either I must have grievously awakened the ire of all the "adapters" and their friends, or the drama must be decidedly bad. I have n't made up my mind yet which of the two is the fact.

I have not seen the "John Bull," or any of the Sunday papers except "The Spectator." If you have any of them, bring 'em with you on Tuesday. I am afraid that for "dirty Cummins'" allusion to Hogarth I shall be reduced to the necessity of being valorous the next time I meet him.

Believe me, most faithfully yours.

V. THE SAME

FURNIVAL'S INN, Monday Afternoon, 7 o'clock [1836].

MY DEAR HULLAH, — Mr. Hogarth has just been here, with news which I think you will be glad to hear. He was with Braham yesterday, who was *far more full* of the opera than he was; speaking highly of my works and "fame" (!), and expressing an earnest desire to be the first to introduce me to the public as a dramatic writer. He said that he intended opening at Michaelmas; and added (unasked) that it was his intention to produce the opera within *one month* of his first night. He wants a low comedy part introduced, — without singing, — thinking it will take with the audience; but he is desirous of explaining to me what he means and who he intends to play it. I am to see him on Sunday morning. Full particulars of the interview shall be duly announced.

Perhaps I shall see you meanwhile. I have only time to add that I am Most faithfully yours.

[1] *The Village Coquettes.*

VI. JOHN HULLAH

PETERSHAM, Monday Evening [1836].

DEAR HULLAH, — Since I called on you this morning I have not had time to look over the words of "The Child and the Old Man." It occurs to me, as I shall see you on Wednesday morning, that the best plan will be for you to bring the music (if you possibly can) without the words, and we can put them in then. Of course this observation applies only to that particular song.

Braham having sent to me about the farce, I called on him this morning. Harley wrote, when he had read the whole of the opera, saying, "It's a sure card — nothing wrong there. Bet you ten pound it runs fifty nights. Come; don't be afraid. You'll be the gainer by it, and you must n't mind betting; it's a capital custom." They tell the story with infinite relish. I saw the fair manageress,[1] who is fully of Harley's opinion; so is Braham. The only difference is, that they are far more enthusiastic than Harley — far more enthusiastic than ourselves even. That is a bold word, is n't it? It is a true one, nevertheless.

"Depend upon it, sir," said Braham to Hogarth yesterday, when he went there to say I should be in town to-day, — "depend upon it, sir, that there has been no such music since the days of Shield, and no such piece since 'The Duenna.'" "Everybody is delighted with it," he added to me, to-day. "I played it to Stansbury, who is by no means an excitable person, and he was *charmed*." This was said with great emphasis, but I have forgotten the grand point. It was not, "I played it to Stansbury," but, "I sang it — *all through ! ! !*"

I begged him, as the choruses are to be put into rehearsal directly the company get together, to let us have, through Mrs. Braham, the necessary passports to the stage, which will be forwarded. He leaves town on the *8th of September*. He will be absent a month, and the first rehearsal will take place immediately on his return; previous to it (I mean the first rehearsal — not the return) I am to read the piece. His only alming suggestion is, that Miss Rainforth will want another when the piece is in rehearsal — "a bravura — something

[1] Mrs. Braham.

in the 'Soldier Tired' way." We must have a confab about this on Wednesday morning.

Harley called in Furnival's Inn, to express his high delight and gratification, but unfortunately we had left town. I shall be at headquarters by twelve Wednesday noon.

Believe me, dear Hullah,
Most faithfully yours.

P. S. — Tell me on Wednesday when you can come down here for a day or two. Beautiful place — meadow for exercise, horse for your riding, boat for your rowing, room for your studying — anything you like.

VII. JOHN FORSTER

Calais, July 2, 1837.

We have arranged for a post-coach to take us to Ghent, Brussels, Antwerp, and a hundred other places, that I cannot recollect now and could n't spell if I did. We went this afternoon in a barouche to some gardens where the people dance, and where they were footing it most heartily, — especially the women, who in their short petticoats and light caps look uncommonly agreeable. A gentleman in a blue surtout and silken berlins accompanied us from the hotel, and acted as curator. He even waltzed with a very smart lady (just to show us, condescendingly, how it ought to be done), and waltzed elegantly, too. We rang for slippers after we came back, and it turned out that this gentleman was the Boots.

VIII. THE SAME

September 3, 1837.

I am much better, and hope to begin "Pickwick No. 18" to-morrow. You will imagine how queer I must have been when I tell you that I have been compelled for four-and-twenty mortal hours to abstain from porter or other malt liquor!!! I have done it though — really. . . . I have discovered that the landlord of the Albion has delicious hollands (but what is that to *you*? for you cannot sympathise with my feelings), and that a cobbler who lives opposite to my bedroom window is a Roman Catholic, and gives an hour and a half to his devotions every

morning behind his counter. I have walked upon the sands at low-water from this place to Ramsgate, and sat upon the same at high-ditto till I have been flayed with the cold. I have seen ladies and gentlemen walking upon the earth in slippers of buff, and pickling themselves in the sea in complete suits of the same. I have seen stout gentlemen looking at nothing through powerful telescopes for hours, and, when at last they saw a cloud of smoke, fancying a steamer behind it, and going home comfortable and happy. I have found out that our next neighbour has a wife and something else under the same roof with the rest of his furniture, — the wife deaf and blind, and the something else given to drinking. And if you ever get to the end of this letter *you* will find out that I subscribe myself on paper, as on everything else, etc., etc.

IX. JOHN FORSTER

November 3, 1837.

It is a beautiful day, and we have been taking advantage of it, but the wind until to-day has been so high and the weather so stormy that Kate has been scarcely able to peep out of doors. On Wednesday it blew a perfect hurricane, breaking windows, knocking down shutters, carrying people off their legs, blowing the fires out, and causing universal consternation. The air was for some hours darkened with a shower of black hats (second-hand), which are supposed to have been blown off the heads of unwary passengers in remote parts of the town, and have been industriously picked up by the fishermen. Charles Kean was advertised for "Othello" "for the benefit of Mrs. Sefton, having most kindly postponed for this one day his departure for London." I have not heard whether he got to the theatre, but I am sure nobody else did. They do "The Honeymoon" to-night, on which occasion I mean to patronise the drayma. We have a beautiful bay-windowed sitting-room here, fronting the sea, but I have seen nothing of B.'s brother who was to have shown me the lions, and my notions of the place are consequently somewhat confined; being limited to the pavilion, the chain-pier, and the sea. The last is quite enough for me, and, unless I am joined by some male companion (*do you think I shall be?*), is most probably all I shall make acquaintance with. I am glad you like "Oliver" this month; especially glad that

you particularise the first chapter. I hope to do great things with Nancy. If I can only work out the idea I have formed of her, and of the female who is to contrast with her, I think I may defy Mr. —— and all his works.[1] I have had great difficulty in keeping my hands off Fagin and the rest of them in the evenings; but as I came down for rest, I have resisted the temptation, and steadily applied myself to the labour of being idle. Did you ever read (of course you have, though) De Foe's "History of the Devil"? What a capital thing it is! I bought it for a couple of shillings yesterday morning, and have been quite absorbed in it ever since. We must have been jolter-headed geniuses not to have anticipated M.'s reply. My best remembrances to him. I see H. at this moment. I must be present at a rehearsal of that opera. It will be better than any comedy that was ever played. Talking of comedies, I still see "No Thoroughfare" staring me in the face, every time I look down that road. I have taken places for Tuesday next. We shall be at home at six o'clock, and I shall hope at least to see you that evening. I am afraid you will find this letter extremely dear at eightpence, but if the warmest assurances of friendship and attachment, and anxious lookings-forward to the pleasure of your society, be worth anything, throw them into the balance, together with a hundred good wishes and one hearty assurance that I am, etc., etc., CHARLES DICKENS. No room for the flourish — I'll finish it the next time I write to you.

X. JOHN FORSTER

December, 1837.

Chapman and Hall have just sent me, with a copy of our deed, three "extra-super" bound copies of "Pickwick," as per specimen inclosed. The first I forward to you, the second I have presented to our good friend Ainsworth, and the third Kate has retained for herself. Accept your copy with one sincere and

[1] The allusion was to the supposed author of a paper in the *Quarterly Review* (Oct. 1837), in the course of which there was much high praise, but where the writer said at the close, "Indications are not wanting that the particular vein of humour which has hitherto yielded so much attractive metal is worked out. . . . The fact is, Mr. Dickens writes too often and too fast. . . . If he persists much longer in this course, it requires no gift of prophecy to foretell his fate: — he has risen like a rocket, and he will come down like the stick." — JOHN FORSTER.

most comprehensive expression of my warmest friendship and esteem; and a hearty renewal, if there need be any renewal when there has been no interruption, of all those assurances of affectionate regard which our close friendship and communion for a long time back has every day implied. . . . That beautiful passage you were so kind and considerate as to send me has given me the only feeling akin to pleasure (sorrowful pleasure it is) that I have yet had, connected with the loss of my dear young friend and companion; for whom my love and attachment will never diminish, and by whose side, if it please God to leave me in possession of sense to signify my wishes, my bones, whenever or wherever I die, will one day be laid. Tell Leigh Hunt when you have an opportunity how much he has affected me, and how deeply I thank him for what he has done. You cannot say it too strongly.

Believe me ever faithfully yours.

XI. W. C. MACREADY

48, Doughty Street, Wednesday Evening [December], 1837.

My dear Sir, — There is a semi-business, semi-pleasure little dinner which I intend to give at The Prince of Wales, in Leicester Place, Leicester Square, on Saturday, at five for half-past precisely, at which only Talfourd, Forster, Ainsworth, Jerdan, and the publishers will be present. It is to celebrate (that is too great a word, but I can think of no better) the conclusion of my "Pickwick" labours; and so I intend, before you take that roll upon the grass you spoke of, to beg your acceptance of one of the first complete copies of the work. I shall be much delighted if you would join us.

I know too well the many anxieties that press upon you just now to seek to persuade you to come if you would prefer a night's repose and quiet. Let me assure you, notwithstanding, most honestly and heartily that there is no one I should be more happy or gratified to see, and that among your brilliant circle of well-wishers and admirers you number none more unaffectedly and faithfully yours than,

My dear Sir, yours most truly.

XII. MRS. CHARLES DICKENS

GRETA BRIDGE, Thursday, February 1, 1838.

MY DEAREST KATE, — I am afraid you will receive this later than I could wish, as the mail does not come through this place until two o'clock to-morrow morning. However, I have availed myself of the very first opportunity of writing, so the fault is that mail's, and not this.

We[1] reached Grantham between nine and ten on Thursday night, and found everything prepared for our reception in the very best inn I have ever put up at. It is odd enough that an old lady, who had been outside all day and came in towards dinner-time, turned out to be the mistress of a Yorkshire school returning from the holiday stay in London. She was a very queer old lady, and showed us a long letter she was carrying to one of the boys from his father, containing a severe lecture (enforced and aided by many texts of Scripture) on his refusing to eat boiled meat. She was very communicative, drank a great deal of brandy and water, and towards evening became insensible, in which state we left her.

Yesterday we were up again shortly after seven A. M., came on upon our journey by the Glasgow mail, which charged us the remarkably low sum of six pounds fare for two places inside. We had a very droll male companion until seven o'clock in the evening, and a most delicious lady's-maid for twenty miles, who implored us to keep a sharp look-out at the coach windows, as she expected the carriage was coming to meet her and she was afraid of missing it. We had many delightful vauntings of the same kind; but in the end it is scarcely necessary to say that the coach did not come, but a very dirty girl did.

As we came further north the mire grew deeper. About eight o'clock it began to fall heavily, and, as we crossed the wild heaths hereabout, there was no vestige of a track. The mail kept on well, however, and at eleven we reached a bare place with a house standing alone in the midst of a dreary moor, which the guard informed us was Greta Bridge. I was in a perfect agony of apprehension, for it was fearfully cold, and there were no outward signs of anybody being up in the house.

[1] Dickens with H. K. Browne was making a trip into Yorkshire, collecting material for *Nicholas Nickleby*.

But to our great joy we discovered a comfortable room, with drawn curtains and a most blazing fire. In half an hour they gave us a smoking supper and a bottle of mulled port (in which we drank your health), and then we retired to a couple of capital bedrooms, in each of which there was a rousing fire halfway up the chimney.

We have had for breakfast, toast, cakes, a Yorkshire pie, a piece of beef about the size and much the shape of my portmanteau, tea, coffee, ham, and eggs; and are now going to look about us. Having finished our discoveries, we start in a post-chaise for Barnard Castle, which is only four miles off, and there I deliver the letter given me by Mitton's friend. All the schools are round about that place, and a dozen old abbeys besides, which we shall visit by some means or other, to-morrow. We shall reach York on Saturday I hope, and (God willing) I trust I shall be at home on Wednesday morning.

I wish you would call on Mrs. Bentley and thank her for the letter; you can tell her when I expect to be in York.

A thousand loves and kisses to the darling boy, whom I see in my mind's eye crawling about the floor of this Yorkshire inn. Bless his heart, I would give two sovereigns for a kiss. Remember me too to Frederick, who I hope is attentive to you.

Is it not extraordinary that the same dreams which have constantly visited me since poor Mary died follow me everywhere? After all the change of scene and fatigue, I have dreamt of her ever since I left home, and no doubt shall till I return. I should be sorry to lose such visions, for they are very happy ones, if it be only the seeing her in one's sleep. I would fain believe, too, sometimes, that her spirit may have some influence over them, but their perpetual repetition is extraordinary.

Love to all friends.

Ever, my dear Kate,

Your affectionate Husband.

XIII. THOMAS MITTON

TWICKENHAM PARK, Tuesday Night.

DEAR TOM, — I sat down this morning and put on paper my testamentary meaning. Whether it is sufficiently legal or not is another question, but I hope it is. The rough draft of

the clauses which I inclose will be preceded by as much of the fair copy as I send you, and followed by the usual clause about the receipts of the trustees being a sufficient discharge. I also wish to provide that if all our children should die before twenty-one, and Kate married again, half the surplus should go to her and half to my surviving brothers and sisters, share and share alike.

This will be all, except a few lines I wish to add which there will be no occasion to consult you about, as they will merely bear reference to a few tokens of remembrance and one or two slight funeral directions. And so pray God that you may be grey, and Forster bald, long before you are called upon to act as my executors.

I suppose I shall see you at the water-party on Thursday? We will then make an appointment for Saturday morning, and if you think my clauses will do, I will complete my copy, seal it up, and leave it in your hands. There are some other papers which you ought to have. We must get a box.

XIV. THOMAS NOON TALFOURD

TWICKENHAM PARK, Sunday, July 15, 1838.

MY DEAR TALFOURD, — I cannot tell you how much pleasure I have derived from the receipt of your letter. I have heard little of you, and seen less, for so long a time, that your handwriting came like the renewal of some old friendship, and gladdened my eyes like the face of some old friend.

If I hear from Lady Holland before you return, I shall, as in duty bound, present myself at her bidding; but between you and me and the general post, I hope she may not renew her invitation until I can visit her with you, as I would much rather avail myself of your personal introduction. However, whatever her ladyship may do I shall respond to, and anyway shall be only too happy to avail myself of what I am sure cannot fail to form a very pleasant and delightful introduction.

Your kind invitation and reminder of the subject of a pleasant conversation in one of our pleasant rides has thrown a gloom over the brightness of Twickenham, for here I am chained. It is indispensably necessary that "Oliver Twist" should be published in three volumes, in September next. I have only just begun the last one, and, having the constant

drawback of my monthly work, shall be sadly harassed to get it finished in time, especially as I have several very important scenes (important to the story I mean) yet to write. Nothing would give me so much pleasure as to be with you for a week or so. I can only imperfectly console myself with the hope that when you see "Oliver" you will like the close of the book, and approve my self-denial in staying here to write it. I should like to know your address in Scotland when you leave town, so that I may send you the earliest copy if it be produced in the vacation, which I pray Heaven it may.

Meanwhile, believe that, though my body is on the banks of the Thames, half my heart is going the Oxford circuit.

Mrs. Dickens and Charley desire their best remembrances (the latter expresses some anxiety, not unmixed with apprehension, relative to the Copyright Bill, in which he conceives himself interested), with hearty wishes that you may have a fine autumn, which is all you want, being sure of all other means of enjoyment that a man can have.

I am, my dear Talfourd,
Ever faithfully yours.

P. S. — I hope you are able to spare a moment now and then to glance at "Nicholas Nickleby," and that you have as yet found no reason to alter the opinion you formed on the appearance of the first number.

You know, I suppose, that they elected me at the Athenæum? Pray thank Mr. Serjeant Storks for me.

XV. MRS. CHARLES DICKENS

LION HOTEL, SHREWSBURY, Thursday, November 1, 1838.

MY DEAREST LOVE, — I received your welcome letter on arriving here last night, and am rejoiced to hear that the dear children are so much better. I hope that in your next, or your next but one, I shall learn that they are quite well. A thousand kisses to them. I wish I could convey them myself.

We found a roaring fire, an elegant dinner, a snug room, and capital beds all ready for us at Leamington, after a very agreeable (but very cold) ride. We started in a post-chaise next morning for Kenilworth, with which we were both enraptured, and where I really think we MUST have lodgings next summer,

;

please God that we are in good health and all goes well. You cannot conceive how delightful it is. To read among the ruins in fine weather would be perfect luxury. From here we went on to Warwick Castle, which is an ancient building, newly restored, and possessing no very great attraction beyond a fine view and some beautiful pictures; and thence to Stratford-upon-Avon, where we sat down in the room where Shakespeare was born, and left our autographs and read those of other people and so forth.

We remained at Stratford all night, and found to our unspeakable dismay that father's plan of proceeding by Bridgenorth was impracticable, as there were no coaches. So we were compelled to come here by way of Birmingham and Wolverhampton, starting at eight o'clock through a cold wet fog, and travelling, when the day had cleared up, through miles of cinder-paths and blazing furnaces and roaring steam-engines, and such a mass of dirt, gloom, and misery as I never before witnessed. We got pretty well accommodated here when we arrived at half-past four, and are now going off in a post-chaise to Llangollen — thirty miles — where we shall remain to-night, and where the Bangor mail will take us up to-morrow. Such are our movements up to this point, and when I have received your letter at Chester I shall write to you again and tell you when I shall be back. I can say positively that I shall not exceed the fortnight, and I think it very possible that I may return a day or two before it expires.

We were at the play last night. It was a bespeak — "The Love Chase," a ballet (with a phenomenon!), divers songs, and "A Roland for an Oliver." It is a good theatre, but the actors are very funny. Browne laughed with such indecent heartiness at one point of the entertainment that an old gentleman in the next box suffered the most violent indignation. The bespeak party occupied two boxes, the ladies were full-dressed, and the gentlemen, to a man, in white gloves with flowers in their button-holes. It amused us mightily, and was really as like the Miss Snevellicci business as it could well be.

My side has been very bad since I left home, although I have been very careful not to drink much, remaining to the full as abstemious as usual, and have not eaten any great quantity, having no appetite. I suffered such an ecstasy of pain all night

at Stratford that I was half dead yesterday, and was obliged last night to take a dose of henbane. The effect was most delicious. I slept soundly, and without feeling the least uneasiness, and am a great deal better this morning; neither do I find that the henbane has affected my head, which, from the great effect it had upon me, — exhilarating me to the most extraordinary degree, and yet keeping me sleepy, — I feared it would. If I had not got better I should have turned back to Birmingham, and come straight home by the railroad. As it is, I hope I shall make out the trip.

God bless you, my darling. I long to be back with you again and to see the sweet Babs.

Your faithful and most affectionate Husband.

XVI. W. C. MACREADY

DOUGHTY STREET, Monday Morning.

MY DEAR MACREADY, — I have not seen you for the past week, because I hoped when we next met to bring "The Lamplighter" in my hand. It would have been finished by this time, but I found myself compelled to set to work first at the "Nickleby" on which I am at present engaged, and which I regret to say — after my close and arduous application last month — I find I cannot write as quickly as usual. I must finish it, at latest, by the 24th (a doubtful comfort!), and the instant I have done so I will apply myself to the farce. I am afraid to name any particular day, but I pledge myself that you shall have it this month, and you may calculate on that promise. I send you with this a copy of a farce[1] I wrote for Harley when he left Drury Lane, and in which he acted for some seventy nights. It is the best thing he does. It is barely possible you might like to try it. Any local or temporary allusions could be easily altered.

Believe me that I only feel gratified and flattered by your 'nquiry after the farce, and that, if I had as much time as I ave inclination, I would write on and on and on, farce after rce and comedy after comedy, until I wrote you something hat would run. You do me justice when you give me credit for good intentions; but the extent of my good-will and strong

[1] *The Strange Gentleman.*

and warm interest in you personally and your great undertaking, you cannot fathom nor express.

Believe me, my dear Macready,

Ever faithfully yours.

P. S. — For Heaven's sake don't fancy that I hold "The Strange Gentleman" in any estimation, or have a wish upon the subject.

XVII. W. C. MACREADY

48, Doughty Street, December 13, 1838.

My dear Macready, — I can have but one opinion on the subject — withdraw the farce at once, by all means.

I perfectly concur in all you say, and thank you most heartily and cordially for your kind and manly conduct, which is only what I should have expected from you; though, under such circumstances, I sincerely believe there are few but you — if any — who would have adopted it.

Believe me that I have no other feeling of disappointment connected with this matter but that arising from the not having been able to be of some use to you. And trust me that, if the opportunity should ever arrive, my ardour will only be increased — not damped — by the result of this experiment.

Believe me always, my dear Macready,

Faithfully yours.

XVIII. THE SAME

Doughty Street, Sunday [1839].

My dear Macready, — I will have, if you please, three dozen of the extraordinary champagne; and I am much obliged to you for recollecting me.

I ought not to be sorry to hear of your abdication,[1] but I am, notwithstanding, most heartily and sincerely sorry, for my own sake and the sake of thousands, who may now go and whistle for a theatre — at least, such a theatre as you gave them; and I do now in my heart believe that for a long and dreary time that exquisite delight has passed away. If I may jest with my misfortunes, and quote the Portsmouth critic of Mr. Crummles's company, I say that: "As an exquisite embodiment of the

[1] From the management of Covent Garden Theatre.

poet's visions and a realisation of human intellectuality, gilding with refulgent light our dreamy moments, and laying open a new and magic world before the mental eye, the drama is gone — perfectly gone."

With the same perverse and unaccountable feeling which causes a heart-broken man at a dear friend's funeral to see something irresistibly comical in a red-nosed or one-eyed undertaker, I receive your communication with ghostly facetiousness; though on a moment's reflection I find better cause for consolation in the hope that, relieved from your most trying and painful duties, you will now have leisure to return to pursuits more congenial to your mind, and to move more easily and pleasantly among your friends. In the long catalogue of the latter, I believe that there is not one prouder of the name, or more grateful for the store of delightful recollections you have enabled him to heap up from boyhood, than,

My dear Macready,

Yours always faithfully.

XIX. W. L. SAMMONS

48, Doughty Street, London, January 31, 1839.

Sir, — Circumstances have enabled me to relinquish my old connection with the "Miscellany" [1] at an earlier period than I had expected. I am no longer its editor, but I have referred your paper to my successor, and marked it as one "requiring attention." I have no doubt it will receive it.

With reference to your letter bearing date on the 8th of last October, let me assure you that I have delayed answering it — not because a constant stream of similar epistles has rendered me callous to the anxieties of a beginner, in those doubtful paths in which I walk myself — but because you ask me to do that which I would scarce do, of my own unsupported opinion, for my own child, supposing I had one old enough to require such a service. To suppose that I could gravely take upon myself the responsibility of withdrawing you from pursuits you have already undertaken, or urging you on in a most uncertain and hazardous course of life, is really a compliment to my judgment and inflexibility which I cannot recognise and do not deserve (or desire). I hoped that a little reflection would show you how impossible it is that I could be expected to enter upon

[1] *Bentley's Miscellany.*

a task of so much delicacy; but as you have written to me since, and called (unfortunately at a period when I am obliged to seclude myself from all comers), I am compelled at last to tell you that I can do nothing of the kind.

If it be any satisfaction to you to know that I have read what you sent me, and read it with great pleasure, though, as you treat of local matters, I am necessarily in the dark here and there, I can give you the assurance very sincerely. With this, and many thanks to you for your obliging expressions towards myself, I am, Sir,

Your very obedient Servant.

XX. JOHN FORSTER

New London Inn, Exeter, March 5, 1839.

I took a little house for them [his parents] this morning, and if they are not pleased with it I shall be grievously disappointed. Exactly a mile beyond the city on the Plymouth Road there are two white cottages: one is theirs and the other belongs to their landlady. I almost forget the number of rooms, but there is an excellent parlour with two other rooms on the ground floor, there is really a beautiful little room over the parlour which I am furnishing as a drawing-room, and there is a splendid garden. The paint and paper throughout is new and fresh and cheerful-looking, the place is clean beyond all description, and the neighbourhood I suppose the most beautiful in this most beautiful of English counties. Of the landlady, a Devonshire widow with whom I had the honour of taking lunch to-day, I must make most especial mention. She is a fat, infirm, splendidly fresh-faced country dame, rising sixty, and recovering from an attack "on the nerves" — I thought they never went off the stones, but I find they try country air with the best of us. In the event of my mother's being ill at any time, I really think the vicinity of this good dame, the very picture of respectability and good-humour, will be the greatest possible comfort. *Her* furniture and domestic arrangements are a capital picture, but that I reserve till I see you, when I anticipate a hearty laugh. She bears the highest character with the bankers and the clergyman (who formerly lived in *my* cottage himself), and is a kind-hearted, worthy, capital specimen of the sort of life, or I have no eye for the real and no idea of finding it out.

This good lady's brother and his wife live in the next nearest cottage, and the brother transacts the good lady's business, the nerves not admitting of her transacting it herself, although they leave her in her debilitated state something sharper than the finest lancet. Now, the brother having coughed all night till he coughed himself into such a perspiration that you might have "wringed his hair," according to the asseveration of eye-witnesses, his wife was sent for to negotiate with me; and if you could have seen me sitting in the kitchen with the two old women, endeavouring to make them comprehend that I had no evil intentions or covert designs, and that I had come down all that way to take some cottage, and had *happened* to walk down that road and see that particular one, you would never have forgotten it. Then, to see the servant girl run backwards and forwards to the sick man, and when the sick man had signed one agreement which I drew up and the old woman instantly put away in a disused tea-caddy, to see the trouble and the number of messages it took before the sick man could be brought to sign another (a duplicate) that we might have one apiece, was one of the richest scraps of genuine drollery I ever saw in all my days. How, when the business was over, we became conversational; how I was facetious, and at the same time virtuous and domestic; how I drank toasts in the beer, and stated on interrogatory that I was a married man and the father of two blessed infants; how the ladies marvelled thereat; how one of the ladies, having been in London, inquired where I lived, and, being told, remembered that Doughty Street and the Foundling Hospital were in the Old Kent Road, which I did n't contradict, — all this and a great deal more must make us laugh when I return, as it makes me laugh now to think of. Of my subsequent visit to the upholsterer recommended by the landlady; of the absence of the upholsterer's wife, and the timidity of the upholsterer, fearful of acting in her absence; of my sitting behind a high desk in a little dark shop, calling over the articles in requisition and checking off the prices as the upholsterer exhibited the goods and called them out; of my coming over the upholsterer's daughter with many virtuous endearments, to propitiate the establishment and reduce the bill, — of these matters I say nothing, either, for the same reason as that just mentioned. The discovery of the cottage I seriously regard as a blessing (not to speak it profanely) upon our efforts in this

cause. I had heard nothing from the bank, and walked straight there, by some strange impulse, directly after breakfast. I am sure they may be happy there; for if I were older, and my course of activity were run, I am sure *I* could, with God's blessing, for many and many a year. . . .

The theatre is open here, and Charles Kean is to-night playing for his last night. If it had been the "rig'lar" drama I should have gone, but I was afraid Sir Giles Overreach might upset me, so I stayed away. My quarters are excellent, and the head waiter is *such* a waiter! Knowles (not Sheridan Knowles, but Knowles of the Cheetham Hill Road[1]) is an ass to him. This sounds bold, but truth is stranger than fiction. By the bye, not the least comical thing that has occurred was the visit of the upholsterer (with some further calculations) since I began this letter. I think they took me here at the New London for the Wonderful Being I am; they were amazingly sedulous; and no doubt they looked for my being visited by the nobility and gentry of the neighbourhood. My first and only visitor came to-night: a ruddy-faced man in faded black, with extracts from a feather bed all over him; an extraordinary and quite miraculously dirty face; a thick stick; and the personal appearance altogether of an amiable bailiff in a green old age. I have not seen the proper waiter since, and more than suspect I shall not recover this blow. He was announced (by *the* waiter) as "a person." I expect my bill every minute. . . .

The waiter is laughing outside the door with another waiter — this is the latest intelligence of my condition.

XXI. GEORGE CATTERMOLE

ELM COTTAGE, PETERSHAM, Wednesday Morning [1839].

MY DEAR CATTERMOLE, — Why is "Peveril" lingering on my dusty shelves in town, while my fair cousin[2] and your fair bride remains in blissful ignorance of his merits? There he is, I grieve to say, but there he shall not be long, for I shall

[1] This was the butler of Mr. Gilbert Winter, one of the kind Manchester friends whose hospitality we had enjoyed with Mr. Ainsworth, and whose shrewd, quaint, old-world ways come delightfully back to me as I write his once well-known and widely-honoured name. — JOHN FORSTER.

[2] Miss Elderton, a distant connection of Dickens, whom Cattermole had just married.

be visiting my other home on Saturday morning, and will bring him bodily down and forward him the moment he arrives.

Not having many of my books here, I don't find any among them which I think more suitable to your purpose than a carpet-bagful sent herewith, containing the Italian and German novelists (convenient as being easily taken up and laid down again; and I suppose you won't read long at a sitting), Leigh Hunt's "Indicator" and "Companion" (which have the same merit), "Hood's Own" (complete), "A Legend of Montrose," and "Kenilworth," which I have just been reading with greater delight than ever, and so I suppose everybody else must be equally interested in. I have Goldsmith, Swift, Fielding, Smollett, and the British Essayists "handy;" and I need not say that you have them on hand too, if you like.

You know all I would say from my heart and soul on the auspicious event of yesterday; but you don't know what I could say about the delightful recollections I have of your "good lady's" charming looks and bearing, upon which I discoursed most eloquently here last evening, and at considerable length. As I am crippled in this respect, however, by the suspicion that possibly she may be looking over your shoulder while you read this note (I would lay a moderate wager that you have looked round twice or thrice already), I shall content myself with saying that I am ever heartily, my dear Cattermole,

Hers and yours.

P. S. — My man (who with his charge is your man while you stay here) waits to know if you have any orders for him.

XXII. J. P. HARLEY

ELM COTTAGE, PETERSHAM, NEAR RICHMOND, June 28, 1839.

MY DEAR HARLEY, — I have "left my home," and been here ever since the end of April, and shall remain here most probably until the end of September, which is the reason that we have been such strangers of late.

I am very sorry that I cannot dine with you on Sunday, but some people are coming here, and I cannot get away. Better luck next time, I hope.

I was on the point of writing to you when your note came, to ask you if you would come down here next Saturday — to-

morrow week, I mean — and stop till Monday. I will either call for you at the theatre, at any time you name, or send for you, "punctual," and have you brought down. Can you come if it 's fine? Say yes, like a good fellow as you are, and say it per post.

I have countermanded that face. Maclise has made another face of me, which all people say is astonishing. The engraving will be ready soon, and I would rather you had that, as I am sure you would if you had seen it.

In great haste to save the post, I am, my dear Harley,

Faithfully yours.

XXIII. W. C. MACREADY

PETERSHAM, July 26, 1839.

MY DEAR MACREADY, — Fix your visit for whenever you please. It can never give us anything but delight to see you, and it is better to look forward to such a pleasure than to look back upon it, as the last gratification is enjoyable all our lives, and the first for a few short stages in the journey.

I feel more true and cordial pleasure than I can express to you in the request you have made. Anything which can serve to commemorate our friendship and to keep the recollection of it alive among our children is, believe me, and ever will be, most deeply prized by me. I accept the offer with hearty and fervent satisfaction; and, to render this pleasant bond between us the more complete, I must solicit you to become godfather to the last and final branch of a genteel small family of three which I am told may be looked for in that auspicious month when Lord Mayors are born and guys prevail. This I look upon as a bargain between us, and I have shaken hands with you in spirit upon it. Family topics remind me of Mr. Kenwigs. As the weather is wet, and he is about to make his last appearance on my little stage, I send Mrs. Macready an early proof of the next number, containing an account of his baby's progress.

I am going to send you something else on Monday — a tragedy. Don't be alarmed. I did n't write it, nor do I want it acted. A young Scotch lady whom I don't know (but she is evidently very intelligent and accomplished) has sent me a translation of a German play, soliciting my aid and advice in

the matter of its publication. Among a crowd of Germanisms, there are many things in it which are so very striking that I am sure it will amuse you very much. At least I think it will; it has me. I am going to send it back to her — when I come to Elstree will be time enough; and meantime, if you bestow a couple of hours upon it, you will not think them thrown away.

It 's a large parcel, and I must keep it here till somebody goes up to town and can book it by the coach. I warrant it, large as it looks, readable in two hours; and I very much want to know what you think of the first act, and especially the opening, which seems to me quite famous. The metre is very odd and rough, but now and then there 's a wildness in it which helps the thing very much; and altogether it has left a something on my mind which I can't get rid of.

Mrs. Dickens joins with me in kindest regards to yourself, Mrs. and Miss Macready. And I am always,

My dear Macready,
Faithfully and truly yours.

P. S. — A dreadful thought has just occurred to me — that this is a quadruple letter, and that Elstree may not be within the twopenny post. Pray Heaven my fears are unfounded.

XXIV. EDWARD CHAPMAN

1, Devonshire Terrace, 27th December, 1839.

My dear Sir, — The place where you pledge yourself to pay for my beef and mutton when I eat it, and my ale and wine when I drink it, is the Treasurer's Office of the Middle Temple, the new building at the bottom of Middle Temple Lane on the right-hand side. You walk up into the first floor and say (boldly) that you come to sign Mr. Charles Dickens's bond — which is already signed by Mr. Serjeant Talfourd. I suppose I should formally acquaint you that I have paid the fees, and that the responsibility you incur is a very slight one — extending very little beyond my good behaviour, and honourable intentions to pay for all wine-glasses, tumblers, or other dinner-furniture that I may break or damage.

I wish you would do me another service, and that is to choose, at the place you told me of, a reasonable copy of "The Beauties of England and Wales." You can choose it quite as

well as I can, or better, and I shall be much obliged to you. I should like you to send it as much as I am diving into all kinds of matters at odd minutes with a view to our forthcoming operations. Faithfully yours.

XXV. GEORGE CATTERMOLE

1, Devonshire Terrace, Monday, January 13, 1840.

My dear Cattermole, — I am going to propound a mightily grave matter to you. My new periodical work appears — or I should rather say the first number does — on Saturday, the 28th of March; and as it has to be sent to America and Germany, and must therefore be considerably in advance, it is now in hand; I having in fact begun it on Saturday last. Instead of being published in monthly parts at a shilling each only, it will be published in weekly parts at threepence, and monthly parts at a shilling; my object being to baffle the imitators and make it as novel as possible. The plan is a new one. I mean the plan of the fiction — and it will comprehend a great variety of tales. The title is "Master Humphrey's Clock."

Now, among other improvements, I have turned my attention to the illustrations, meaning to have wood-cuts [illegible] text and no separate plates. I want to know whether you would object to make me a little sketch [illegible] Indian ink would be quite sufficient [illegible] closed scrap; the subject, an old [illegible] Elizabethan furniture, and in the [illegible] dinary old clock — the clock belonging to [illegible] fact, and no figures. This I should [illegible] head of my opening page.

I want to know besides [illegible] partners in the matter, [illegible] asking or your answering [illegible] charge for such a thing, [illegible] expectations) you would [illegible] vals, and, if so, on what [illegible] intend to ask Maclise [illegible] the drawing on wood [illegible] style. We are printing [illegible] the sale would [illegible] and when I expect [illegible]

think you will see that it opens a vast number of very good subjects.

I want to talk the matter over with you, and wish you would fix your own time and place — either here or at your house or at the Athenæum, though this would be the best place, because I have my papers about me. If you would take a chop with me, for instance, on Tuesday or Wednesday, I could tell you more in two minutes than in twenty letters, albeit I have endeavoured to make this as business-like and stupid as need be.

Of course all these tremendous arrangements are as yet a profound secret, or there would be fifty Humphreys in the field. So write me a line like a worthy gentleman, and convey my best remembrances to your worthy lady.

Believe me always, my dear Cattermole,

Faithfully yours.

XXVI. DANIEL MACLISE

BROADSTAIRS, June 2, 1840.

MY DEAR MACLISE, —

My foot is in the house,
My bath is on the sea,
And, before I take a souse,
Here 's a single note to thee.

It merely says that the sea is in a state of extraordinary sublimity; that this place is, as the Guide-Book most justly observes, "unsurpassed for the salubrity of the refreshing breezes, which are wafted on the ocean's pinions from far-distant shores." That we are all right after the perils and voyages of yesterday. That the sea is rolling away in front of the window at which I indite this epistle, and that everything is as fresh and glorious as fine weather and a splendid coast can make it. Bear these recommendations in mind, and, shunning Talfourdian pledges, come to the bower which is shaded for you in the one-pair front, where no chair or table has four legs of the same length, and where no drawers will open till you have pulled the pegs off, and then they keep open and won't shut again.

COME!

I can no more.

Always faithfully yours.

XXVII. JOHN FORSTER

September 15, 1840.

I have been rather surprised of late to have applications from Roman Catholic clergymen, demanding (rather pastorally, and with a kind of grave authority) assistance, literary employment, and so forth. At length it struck me that, through some channel or other, I must have been represented as belonging to that religion. Would you believe that in a letter from Lamert, at Cork, to my mother, which I saw last night, he says, "What do the papers mean by saying that Charles is demented, and, further, *that he has turned Roman Catholic?*"

XXVIII. GEORGE CATTERMOLE

Devonshire Terrace, Friday Morning.

My dear Cattermole, — I sent the MS. of the inclosed proof, marked 2, up to Chapman and Hall, from Devonshire, mentioning a subject of an old gateway, which I had put in expressly with a view to your illustrious pencil. By a mistake, however, it went to Browne instead. Chapman is out of town, and such things have gone wrong in consequence.

The subject to which I wish to call your attention is in an unwritten number to follow this one, but it is a mere echo of what you will find at the conclusion of this proof marked 2. I want the cart, gaily decorated, going through the street of the old town with the wax brigand displayed to fierce advantage, and the child seated in it also, dispersing bills. As many flags and inscriptions about Jarley's Wax Work fluttering from the cart as you please. You know the wax brigands, and how they contemplate small oval miniatures? That's the figure I want. I send you the scrap of MS. which contains the subject.

Will you, when you have done this, send it with all speed to Chapman and Hall, as we are mortally pressed for time, and I must go hard to work to make up for what I have lost by being dutiful and going to see my father.

I want to see you about a frontispiece to our first "Clock" volume, which will come out (I think) at the end of September, and about other matters. When shall we meet, and where?

I say nothing about our cousin or the baby, for Kate bears

this, and will make me a full report and convey all loves and congratulations.

Could you dine with us on Sunday, at six o'clock sharp? I 'd come and fetch you in the morning, and we could take a ride and walk. We shall be quite alone, unless Macready comes. What say you?

Don't forget despatch, there 's a dear fellow, and ever believe me,

Heartily yours.

XXIX. GEORGE CATTERMOLE

December 22, 1840.

DEAR GEORGE, — The child lying dead in the little sleeping-room, which is behind the open screen. It is winter-time, so there are no flowers; but upon her breast and pillow, and about her bed, there may be strips of holly and berries, and such free green things. Window overgrown with ivy. The little boy who had that talk with her about angels may be by the bedside, if you like it so; but I think it will be quieter and more peaceful if she is quite alone. I want it to express the most beautiful repose and tranquillity, and to have something of a happy look, if death can.

2.

The child has been buried inside the church, and the old man, who cannot be made to understand that she is dead, repairs to the grave and sits there all day long, waiting for her arrival, to begin another journey. His staff and knapsack, her little bonnet and basket, etc., lie beside him. "She 'll come to-morrow," he says, when it gets dark, and goes sorrowfully home. I think an hour-glass running out would help the notion; perhaps her little things upon his knee, or in his hand.

I am breaking my heart over this story, and cannot bear to finish it.

Love to Missis.

Ever and always heartily.

XXX. GEORGE CATTERMOLE

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, Thursday Evening, Jan. 28, 1841.

MY DEAR GEORGE, — I sent to Chapman and Hall yesterday morning about the second subject for No. 2 of "Barnaby," but found they had sent it to Browne.

The first subject of No. 3 I will either send to you on Saturday, or, at latest, on Sunday morning. I have also directed Chapman and Hall to send you proofs of what has gone before, for reference, if you need it.

I want to know whether you feel ravens in general and would fancy Barnaby's raven in particular. Barnaby being an idiot, my notion is to have him always in company with a pet raven, who is immeasurably more knowing than himself. To this end I have been studying my bird, and think I could make a very queer character of him. Should you like the subject when this raven makes his first appearance?

Faithfully always.

XXXI. THE SAME

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, Saturday Evening, Jan. 30, 1841.

MY DEAR GEORGE, — I send you the first four slips of No. 48, containing the description of the locksmith's house, which I think will make a good subject, and one you will like. If you put the "'prentice" in it, show nothing more than his paper cap, because he will be an important character in the story, and you will need to know more about him, as he is minutely described. I may as well say that he is very short. Should you wish to put the locksmith in, you will find him described in No. 2 of "Barnaby" (which I told Chapman and Hall to send you). Browne has done him in one little thing, but so very slightly that you will not require to see his sketch, I think.

Now, I must know what you think about the raven, my buck; I otherwise am in this fix. I have given Browne no subject for this number, and time is flying. If you would like to have the raven's first appearance, and don't object to having both subjects, so be it. I shall be delighted. If otherwise, I must feed that hero forthwith.

I cannot close this hasty note, my dear fellow, without saying that I have deeply felt your hearty and most invaluable co-operation in the beautiful illustrations you have made for the last story, that I look at them with a pleasure I cannot describe to you in words, and that it is impossible for me to say how sensible I am of your earnest and friendly aid. Believe me that this is the very first time any designs for what I have written have touched and moved me, and caused me to feel that they expressed the idea I had in my mind.

I am most sincerely and affectionately grateful to you, and am full of pleasure and delight.

Believe me, my dear Cattermole,

Always heartily yours.

XXXII. JOHN TOMLIN

1, Devonshire Terrace, York Gate, Regent's Park, London, Tuesday, Feb. 23, 1841.

Dear Sir, — You are quite right in feeling assured that I should answer the letter you have addressed to me. If you had entertained a presentiment that it would afford me sincere pleasure and delight to hear from a warm-hearted and admiring reader of my books in the backwoods of America, you would not have been far wrong.

I thank you cordially and heartily both for your letter and its kind and courteous terms. To think that I have awakened a fellow-feeling and sympathy with the creatures of many thoughtful hours among the vast solitudes in which you dwell, is a source of the purest delight and pride to me; and believe me that your expressions of affectionate remembrance and approval, sounding from the green forests on the banks of the Mississippi, sink deeper into my heart and gratify it more than all the honorary distinctions that all the courts in Europe could confer.

It is such things as these that make one hope one does not live in vain, and that are the highest reward of an author's life. To be numbered among the household gods of one's distant countrymen, and associated with their homes and quiet pleasures; to be told that in each nook and corner of the world's great mass there lives one well-wisher who holds communion with one in the spirit, is a worthy fame indeed, and one which I would not barter for a mine of wealth.

That I may be happy enough to cheer some of your leisure hours for a very long time to come, and to hold a place in your pleasant thoughts, is the earnest wish of "Boz."

And with all good wishes for yourself, and with a sincere reciprocation of all your kindly feeling,

I am, dear sir,
Faithfully yours.

XXXIII. R. MONCKTON MILNES

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, Wednesday, March 10, 1841.

MY DEAR MILNES, — I thank you very much for the "Nickleby" correspondence, which I will keep for a day or two, and return when I see you. Poor fellow! The long letter is quite admirable, and most affecting.

I am not quite sure either of Friday or Saturday, for, independently of the "Clock" (which for ever wants winding), I am getting a young brother off to New Zealand just now, and have my mornings sadly cut up in consequence. But knowing your ways, I know I may say that I will come if I can; and that if I can't I won't.

That Nellicide was the act of Heaven, as you may see any of these fine mornings when you look about you. If you knew the pain it gave me — but what am I talking of? if you don't know, nobody does. I am glad to shake you by the hand again autographically,

And am always,
Faithfully yours.

XXXIV. DANIEL MACLISE

March 12, 1841.

You will be greatly shocked and grieved to hear that the Raven is no more. He expired to-day at a few minutes after twelve o'clock at noon. He had been ailing for a few days, but we anticipated no serious result, conjecturing that a portion of the white paint he swallowed last summer might be lingering about his vitals without having any serious effect upon his constitution. Yesterday afternoon he was taken so much worse that I sent an express for the medical gentleman (Mr. Herring), who promptly attended, and administered a powerful dose of

castor oil. Under the influence of this medicine, he recovered so far as to be able at eight o'clock P. M. to bite Topping. His night was peaceful. This morning at daybreak he appeared better; received (agreeably to the doctor's directions) another dose of castor oil; and partook plentifully of some warm gruel, the flavour of which he appeared to relish. Towards eleven o'clock he was so much worse that it was found necessary to muffle the stable knocker. At half past, or thereabouts, he was heard talking to himself about the horse and Topping's family, and to add some incoherent expressions which are supposed to have been either a foreboding of his approaching dissolution, or some wishes relative to the disposal of his little property; consisting chiefly of halfpence which he had buried in different parts of the garden. On the clock striking twelve he appeared slightly agitated, but he soon recovered, walked twice or thrice along the coach-house, stopped to bark, staggered, exclaimed *Halloa old girl!* (his favourite expression), and died.

He behaved throughout with a decent fortitude, equanimity, and self-possession, which cannot be too much admired. I deeply regret that being in ignorance of his danger I did not attend to receive his last instructions. Something remarkable about his eyes occasioned Topping to run for the doctor at twelve. When they returned together our friend was gone. It was the medical gentleman who informed me of his decease. He did it with great caution and delicacy, preparing me by the remark that "a jolly queer start had taken place;" but the shock was very great notwithstanding. I am not wholly free from suspicions of poison. A malicious butcher has been heard to say that he would "do" for him; his plea was that he would not be molested in taking orders down the mews, by any bird that wore a tail. Other persons have also been heard to threaten; among others Charles Knight, who has just started a weekly publication, price fourpence — "Barnaby" being, as you know, threepence. I have directed a post-mortem examination, and the body has been removed to Mr. Herring's school of anatomy for that purpose.

I could wish, if you can take the trouble, that you could inclose this to Forster immediately after you have read it. I cannot discharge the painful task of communication more than once. Were they ravens who took manna to somebody in the wilderness? At times I hope they were, and at others I fear

they were not, or they would certainly have stolen it by the way. In profound sorrow, I am ever your bereaved friend C. D. Kate is as well as can be expected, but terribly low, as you may suppose. The children seem rather glad of it. He bit their ankles. But that was play.

XXXV. WILLIAM HARRISON AINSWORTH

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, April 29, 1841.

MY DEAR AINSWORTH, — With all imaginable pleasure, I quite look forward to the day. It is an age since we met, and it ought not to be.

The artist had just sent home your "Nickleby." He suggested variety, pleading his fancy and genius. As an artful binder must have his way, I put the best face on the matter, and gave him his. I will bring it together with the "Pickwick" to your house-warming with me.

The old Royal George went down in consequence of having too much weight on one side. I trust the new First Rate won't be heavy anywhere. There seems to me to be too much whisker for a shilling, but that 's a matter of taste.[1]

Faithfully yours always.

XXXVI. G. LOVEJOY

1, DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, YORK GATE, REGENT'S PARK,
Monday Evening, May 31, 1841.

SIR, — I am much obliged and flattered by the receipt of your letter, which I should have answered immediately on its arrival but for my absence from home at the moment.

My principles and inclinations would lead me to aspire to the distinction you invite me to seek,[2] if there were any reasonable chance of success, and I hope I should do no discredit to such an honour if I won and wore it. But I am bound to add, and I have no hesitation in saying plainly, that I cannot afford the expense of a contested election. If I could, I would act on your suggestion instantly. I am not the less indebted to you and the friends to whom the thought occurred, for your good opinion and approval. I beg you to understand that I am restrained solely (and much against my will) by the consideration I have mentioned, and thank both you and them most warmly.

Yours faithfully.

[1] Ainsworth had succeeded Dickens in the editorship of *Bentley's Miscellany*.

[2] To represent Reading in Parliament.

XXXVII. G. LOVEJOY

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, June 10, 1841.

DEAR SIR, — I am favoured with your note of yesterday's date, and lose no time in replying to it.

The sum you mention, though small I am aware in the abstract, is greater than I could afford for such a purpose; as the mere sitting in the House and attending to my duties, if I were a member, would oblige me to make many pecuniary sacrifices, consequent upon the very nature of my pursuits.

The course you suggest did occur to me when I received your first letter, and I have very little doubt indeed that the Government would support me — perhaps to the whole extent. But I cannot satisfy myself that to enter Parliament under such circumstances would enable me to pursue that honourable independence without which I could neither preserve my own respect nor that of my constituents. I confess therefore (it may be from not having considered the points sufficiently, or in the right light) that I cannot bring myself to propound the subject to any member of the administration whom I know. I am truly obliged to you nevertheless, and am,

Dear sir, faithfully yours.

XXXVIII. JOHN FORSTER

June 23, 1841.

I have been this morning to the Parliament House, and am now introduced (I hope) to everybody in Edinburgh. The hotel is perfectly besieged, and I have been forced to take refuge in a sequestered apartment at the end of a long passage, wherein I write this letter. They talk of three hundred at the dinner. We are very well off in point of rooms, having a handsome sitting-room, another next to it for "Clock" purposes, a spacious bedroom, and large dressing-room adjoining. The castle is in front of the windows, and the view noble. There was a supper ready last night which would have been a dinner anywhere.

The renowned Peter Robertson is a large, portly, full-faced man, with a merry eye, and a queer way of looking under his spectacles which is characteristic and pleasant. He seems a

very warm-hearted earnest man too, and I felt quite at home with him forthwith. Walking up and down the hall of the courts of law (which was full of advocates, writers to the signet, clerks, and idlers) was a tall, burly, handsome man of eight-and-fifty, with a gait like O'Connell's, the bluest eye you can imagine, and long hair — longer than mine — falling down in a wild way under the broad brim of his hat. He had on a surtout coat, a blue checked shirt; the collar standing up, and kept in its place with a wisp of black neckerchief; no waistcoat; and a large pocket-handkerchief thrust into his breast, which was all broad and open. At his heels followed a wiry, sharp-eyed, shaggy devil of a terrier, dogging his steps as he went slashing up and down, now with one man beside him, now with another, and now quite alone, but always at a fast, rolling pace, with his head in the air, and his eyes as wide open as he could get them. I guessed it was Wilson, and it was. A bright, clear-complexioned, mountain-looking fellow, he looks as though he had just come down from the Highlands, and had never in his life taken pen in hand. But he has had an attack of paralysis in his right arm, within this month. He winced when I shook hands with him; and once or twice, when we were walking up and down, slipped as if he had stumbled on a piece of orange-peel. He is a great fellow to look at, and to talk to; and, if you could divest your mind of the actual Scott, is just the figure you would put in his place. . . .

Allan has been squiring me about, all the morning. He and Fletcher have gone to a meeting of the dinner-stewards, and I take the opportunity of writing to you. They dine with us to-day, and we are going to-night to the theatre. M'Ian is playing there. I mean to leave a card for him before evening. We are engaged for every day of our stay, already; but the people I have seen are so very hearty and warm in their manner that much of the horrors of lionisation gives way before it. I am glad to find that they propose giving me for a toast on Friday the Memory of Wilkie. I should have liked it better than anything, if I could have made my choice. Communicate all particulars to Mac. I would to God you were both here. Do dine together at the Gray's Inn on Friday, and think of me. If I don't drink my first glass of wine to you, may my pistols miss fire, and my mare slip her shoulder. All sorts of regard from Kate. She has gone with Miss Allan to see the house she was born in, etc. Write me soon, and long, etc.

XXXIX. JOHN FORSTER

June 26, 1841.

The great event is over; and being gone, I am a man again. It was the most brilliant affair you can conceive; the completest success possible, from first to last. The room was crammed, and more than seventy applicants for tickets were of necessity refused yesterday. Wilson was ill, but plucked up like a lion, and spoke famously. I send you a paper herewith, but the report is dismal in the extreme. They say there will be a better one — I don't know where or when. Should there be, I will send it to you. I *think* (ahem !) that I spoke rather well. It was an excellent room, and both the subjects (Wilson and Scottish Literature, and the Memory of Wilkie) were good to go upon. There were nearly two hundred ladies present. The place is so contrived that the cross table is raised enormously, much above the heads of people sitting below, and the effect on first coming in (on me, I mean) was rather tremendous. I was quite self-possessed, however, and, notwithstanding the enthoosemoosy, which was very startling, as cool as a cucumber. I wish to God you had been there, as it is impossible for the "distinguished guest" to describe the scene. It beat all natur. . . .

XL. GEORGE CATTERMOLE

Devonshire Terrace, Thursday, August 13.

My dear Cattermole, — Will you turn your attention to a frontispiece for our first volume,[1] to come upon the left-hand side of the book as you open it, and to face a plain printed title? My idea is, some scene from the "Curiosity Shop," in a pretty border, or scroll work, or architectural device; it matters not what, so that it be pretty. The scene even might be a fanciful thing, partaking of the character of the story, but not reproducing any particular passage in it, if you thought that better for the effect.

I ask you to think of this, because, although the volume is not published until the end of September, there is no time to lose. We wish to have it engraved with great care, and worked

[1] *Master Humphrey's Clock.*

very skilfully; and this cannot be done unless we get it on the stocks soon.

They will give you every opportunity of correction, alteration, revision, and all other ations and isions connected with the fine arts.

Always believe me,
Faithfully yours.

XLI. GEORGE CATTERMOLE

BROADSTAIRS, August 19, 1841.

MY DEAR GEORGE, — When Hugh and a small body of the rioters cut off from The Warren beckoned to their pals, they forced into a very remarkable post-chaise Dolly Varden and Emma Haredale, and bore them away with all possible rapidity; one of their company driving, and the rest running beside the chaise, climbing up behind, sitting on the top, lighting the way with their torches, etc., etc. If you can express the women inside without showing them — as by a fluttering veil, a delicate arm, or so forth, appearing at the half-closed window — so much the better. Mr. Tappertit stands on the steps, which are partly down, and, hanging on to the window with one hand and extending the other with great majesty, addresses a few words of encouragement to the driver and attendants. Hugh sits upon the bar in front; the driver sitting postilion-wise, and turns round to look through the window behind him at the little doves within. The gentlemen behind are also anxious to catch a glimpse of the ladies. One of those who are running at the side may be gently rebuked for his curiosity by the cudgel of Hugh. So they cut away, sir, as fast as they can.

Always faithfully.

P. S. — John Willet's bar is noble.

We take it for granted that cousin and baby are hearty. Our loves to them.

XLII. W. C. MACREADY

BROADSTAIRS, Tuesday, August 24, 1841.

MY DEAR MACREADY, — I must thank you, most heartily and cordially, for your kind note relative to poor Overs.[1] I can't tell you how glad I am to know that he thoroughly deserves such kindness.

What a good fellow Elliotson is. He kept him in his room a whole hour, and has gone into his case as if he were Prince Albert; laying down all manner of elaborate projects and determining to leave his friend Wood in town when he himself goes away, on purpose to attend to him. Then he writes me four sides of paper about the man, and says he can't go back to his old work, for that requires muscular exertion (and muscular exertion he must n't make), what are we to do with him? He says: "Here 's five pounds for the present."

I declare before God that I could almost bear the Jones's for five years out of the pleasure I feel in knowing such things, and when I think that every dirty speck upon the fair face of the Almighty's creation, who writes in a filthy, beastly newspaper; every rotten-hearted pander who has been beaten, kicked, and rolled in the kennel, yet struts it in the editorial "We," once a week; every vagabond that an honest man's gorge must rise at; every live emetic in that noxious drug-shop, the press, can have his fling at such men and call them knaves and fools and thieves, I grow so vicious that, with bearing hard upon my pen, I break the nib down, and, with keeping my teeth set, make my jaws ache.

I have put myself out of sorts for the day, and shall go and walk, unless the direction of this sets me up again. On second thoughts I think it will.

Always, my dear Macready,

Your faithful friend.

[1] It will be remembered that Dickens wrote afterwards a Preface to Overs' *Evenings of a Working Man*. See Vol. xxviii. p. 329.

XLIII. JOHN FORSTER

September 13, 1841.

There 's no news since my last. We are going to dine with Rogers to-day, and with Lady Essex, who is also here. Rogers is much pleased with Lord Ashley, who was offered by Peel a post in the government, but resolutely refused to take office unless Peel pledged himself to factory improvement. Peel "had n't made up his mind," and Lord Ashley was deaf to all other inducements, though they must have been very tempting. Much do I honour him for it. I am in an exquisitely lazy state, bathing, walking, reading, lying in the sun, doing everything but working. This frame of mind is superinduced by the prospect of rest, and the promising arrangements which I owe to you. I am still haunted by visions of America night and day. To miss this opportunity would be a sad thing. Kate cries dismally if I mention the subject. But, God willing, I think it *must* be managed somehow!

XLIV. THE SAME

September 22, 1841.

. . . I wrote to Chapman and Hall asking them what they thought of it,[1] and saying I meant to keep a note-book, and publish it for half a guinea or thereabouts, on my return. They instantly sent the warmest possible reply, and said they had taken it for granted I would go, and had been speaking of it only the day before. I have begged them to make every inquiry about the fares, cabins, berths, and times of sailing; and I shall make a great effort to take Kate *and* the children. In that case I shall try to let the house furnished, for six months (for I shall remain that time in America); and if I succeed, the rent will nearly pay the expenses out, and home. I have heard of family cabins at £100; and I think one of these is large enough to hold us all. A single fare, I think, is forty guineas. I fear I could not be happy if we had the Atlantic between us; but leaving them in New York while I ran off a thousand miles or so, would be quite another thing. If I can arrange all my plans before publishing the "Clock" address, I shall state therein that

[1] A proposed trip to America.

I am going; which will be no unimportant consideration, as affording the best possible reason for a long delay. How I am to get on without you for seven or eight months, I cannot, upon my soul, conceive. I dread to think of breaking up all our old happy habits for so long a time. The advantages of going, however, appear by steady looking-at so great that I have come to persuade myself it is a matter of imperative necessity. Kate weeps whenever it is spoken of. Washington Irving has got a nasty low fever. I heard from him a day or two ago.

XLV. MRS. HOGARTH

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, Sunday, October 24, 1841.

MY DEAR MRS. HOGARTH, — For God's sake be comforted,[1] and bear this well, for the love of your remaining children.

I had always intended to keep poor Mary's grave for us and our dear children, and for you. But if it will be any comfort to you to have poor George buried there, I will cheerfully arrange to place the ground at your entire disposal. Do not consider me in any way. Consult only your own heart. Mine seems to tell me that, as they both died so young and so suddenly, they ought both to be buried together.

Try — do try — to think that they have but preceded you to happiness, and will meet you with joy in heaven. There *is* consolation in the knowledge that you have treasure there, and that while you live on earth there are creatures among the angels who owed their being to you.

Always yours with true affection.

XLVI. MARY TALFOURD

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, December 16, 1841.

MY DEAR MARY, — I should be delighted to come and dine with you on your birthday, and to be as merry as I wish you to be always; but as I am going, within a very few days afterwards, a very long distance from home, and shall not see any of my children for six long months, I have made up my mind to pass all that week at home for their sakes; just as you would like your papa and mamma to spend all the time they possibly could spare with you if they were about to make a dreary voyage to America; which is what I am going to do myself.

[1] On the occasion of the sudden death of Mrs. Hogarth's son, George.

But although I cannot come to see you on that day, you may be sure I shall not forget that it is your birthday, and that I shall drink your health and many happy returns, in a glass of wine, filled as full as it will hold. And I shall dine at half-past five myself, so that we may both be drinking our wine at the same time; and I shall tell my Mary (for I have got a daughter of that name, but she is a very small one as yet) to drink your health too; and we shall try and make believe that you are here, or that we are in Russell Square, which is the best thing we can do, I think, under the circumstances.

You are growing up so fast that by the time I come home again I expect you will be almost a woman; and in a very few years we shall be saying to each other: "Don't you remember what the birthdays used to be in Russell Square?" and "How strange it seems!" and "How quickly time passes!" and all that sort of thing, you know. But I shall always be very glad to be asked on your birthday, and to come if you will let me, and to send my love to you, and to wish that you may live to be very old and very happy, which I do now with all my heart.

Believe me always,

My dear Mary,

Yours affectionately.

XLVII. WASHINGTON IRVING

MY DEAR SIR, — There is no man in the world who could have given me the heart-felt pleasure you have, by your kind note of the 13th of last month. There is no living writer, and there are very few among the dead, whose approbation I should feel so proud to earn. And with everything you have written upon my shelves, and in my thoughts, and in my heart of hearts, I may honestly and truly say so. If you could know how earnestly I write this, you would be glad to read it — as I hope you will be, faintly guessing at the warmth of the hand I autobiographically hold out to you over the broad Atlantic.

I wish I could find in your welcome letter some hint of an intention to visit England. I can't. I have held it at arm's length, and taken a bird's-eye view of it, after reading it a great many times, but there is no greater encouragement in it this way than on a microscopic inspection. I should love to go with you — as I have gone, God knows how often — into Little

Britain, and Eastcheap, and Green Arbour Court, and Westminster Abbey. I should like to travel with you, outside the last of the coaches, down to Bracebridge Hall. It would make my heart glad to compare notes with you about that shabby gentleman in the oilcloth hat and red nose, who sat in the nine-cornered back parlour of the Masons' Arms; and about Robert Preston and the tallow-chandler's widow, whose sitting-room is second nature to me; and about all those delightful places and people that I used to walk about and dream of in the day-time, when a very small and not over-particularly-taken-care-of boy. I have a good deal to say, too, about that dashing Alonzo de Ojeda, that you can't help being fonder of than you ought to be; and much to hear concerning Moorish legend, and poor unhappy Boabdil. Diedrich Knickerbocker I have worn to death in my pocket, and yet I should show you his mutilated carcass with a joy past all expression.

I have been so accustomed to associate you with my pleasantest and happiest thoughts, and with my leisure hours, that I rush at once into full confidence with you, and fall, as it were naturally, and by the very laws of gravity, into your open arms. Questions come thronging to my pen as to the lips of people who meet after long hoping to do so. I don't know what to say first or what to leave unsaid, and am constantly disposed to break off and tell you again how glad I am this moment has arrived.

My dear Washington Irving, I cannot thank you enough for your cordial and generous praise, or tell you what deep and lasting gratification it has given me. I hope to have many letters from you, and to exchange a frequent correspondence. I send this to say so. After the first two or three I shall settle down into a connected style, and become gradually rational.

You know what the feeling is, after having written a letter, sealed it, and sent it off. I shall picture your reading this, and answering it before it has lain one night in the post-office. Ten to one that before the fastest packet could reach New York I shall be writing again.

Do you suppose the post-office clerks care to receive letters? I have my doubts. They get into a dreadful habit of indifference. A postman, I imagine, is quite callous. Conceive his delivering one to himself, without being startled by a preliminary double knock! Always your faithful Friend.

papers under their arms; worsted comforters (very much the worse for wear) round their necks; and so forth. "Aha!" says I, "this is like our London Bridge;" believing of course that these visitors were newsboys. But what do you think of their being EDITORS? And what do you think of their tearing violently up to me and beginning to shake hands like madmen? Oh! if you could have seen how I wrung their wrists! And if you could but know how I hated one man in very dirty gaiters, and with very protruding upper teeth, who said to all comers after him, "So you've been introduced to our friend Dickens — eh?" There was one among them, though, who really was of use; a Doctor S., editor of the ——. He ran off here (two miles at least), and ordered rooms and dinner. And in course of time Kate, and I, and Lord Mulgrave (who was going back to his regiment at Montreal on Monday, and had agreed to live with us in the mean while) sat down in a spacious and handsome room to a very handsome dinner, bating peculiarities of putting on table, and had forgotten the ship entirely. A Mr. Alexander, to whom I had written from England, promising to sit for a portrait, was on board directly we touched the land, and brought us here in his carriage. Then, after sending a present of most beautiful flowers, he left us to ourselves, and we thanked him for it.

L. JOHN FORSTER

BOSTON, January 29, 1842.

. . . Dana, the author of that "Two Years before the Mast" (a book which I had praised much to him, thinking it like De Foe), is a very nice fellow indeed; and in appearance not at all the man you would expect. He is short, mild-looking, and has a care-worn face. His father is exactly like George Cruikshank after a night's jollity — only shorter. The professors at the Cambridge university, Longfellow, Felton, Jared Sparks, are noble fellows. So is Kenyon's friend, Ticknor. Bancroft is a famous man; a straightforward, manly, earnest heart; and talks much of you, which is a great comfort. Doctor Channing I will tell you more of, after I have breakfasted alone with him next Wednesday. . . . Sumner is of great service to me. . . . The president of the Senate here presides at my dinner on Tuesday. Lord Mulgrave lingered with us till last Tuesday

(we had our little captain to dinner on the Monday), and then went on to Canada. Kate is quite well, and so is Anne, whose smartness surpasses belief. They yearn for home, and so do I. . . .

On looking back through these sheets, I am astonished to find how little I have told you, and how much I have, even now, in store which shall be yours by word of mouth. The American poor, the American factories, the institutions of all kinds — I have a book, already. There is no man in this town, or in this State of New England, who has not a blazing fire and a meat dinner every day of his life. A flaming sword in the air would not attract so much attention as a beggar in the streets. There are no charity uniforms, no wearisome repetition of the same dull ugly dress, in that blind-school.[1] All are attired after their own tastes, and every boy and girl has his or her individuality as distinct and unimpaired as you would find it in their own homes. At the theatres, all the ladies sit in the fronts of the boxes. The gallery are as quiet as the dress-circle at dear Drury Lane. A man with seven heads would be no sight at all, compared with one who could n't read and write.

I won't speak (I say "speak!" — I wish I could) about the dear precious children, because I know how much we shall hear about them when we receive those letters from home for which we long so ardently.

LI. THOMAS MITTON

TREMONT HOUSE, BOSTON, January 31, 1842.

MY DEAR MITTON, — I am so exhausted with the life I am obliged to lead here that I have had time to write but one letter which is at all deserving of the name, as giving any account of our movements. Forster has it, in trust, to tell you all its news; and he has also some newspapers which I had an opportunity of sending him, in which you will find further particulars of our progress.

We had a dreadful passage, the worst, the officers all concur in saying, that they have ever known. We were eighteen days coming; experienced a dreadful storm which swept away our

[1] The school in which Laura Bridgman was taught, and which is described at length in *American Notes*.

paddle-boxes and stove our lifeboats; and ran aground besides, near Halifax, among rocks and breakers, where we lay at anchor all night. After we left the English Channel we had only one fine day. And we had the additional discomfort of being eighty-six passengers. I was ill five days, Kate six; though, indeed, she had a swelled face and suffered the utmost terror all the way.

I can give you no conception of my welcome here. There never was a king or emperor upon the earth so cheered and followed by crowds, and entertained in public at splendid balls and dinners, and waited on by public bodies and deputations of all kinds. I have had one from the Far West — a journey of two thousand miles! If I go out in a carriage, the crowd surround it and escort me home; if I go to the theatre, the whole house (crowded to the roof) rises as one man, and the timbers ring again. You cannot imagine what it is. I have five great public dinners on hand at this moment, and invitations from every town and village and city in the States.

There is a great deal afloat here in the way of subjects for description. I keep my eyes open pretty wide, and hope to have done so to some purpose by the time I come home.

When you write to me again — I say again, hoping that your first letter will be soon upon its way here — direct to me to the care of David Colden, Esq., New York. He will forward all communications by the quickest conveyance, and will be perfectly acquainted with all my movements.

Always your faithful Friend.

LII. JOHN FORSTER

CARLTON HOUSE, NEW YORK, February 17, 1842.

. . . As there is a sailing-packet from here to England tomorrow which is warranted (by the owners) to be a marvellous fast sailer, and as it appears most probable that she will reach home (I write the word with a pang) before the Cunard steamer of next month, I indite this letter. And lest this letter should reach you before another letter which I despatched from here last Monday, let me say in the first place that I *did* despatch a brief epistle to you on that day, together with a newspaper, and a pamphlet touching the Boz ball; and that I put in the post-office at Boston another newspaper for you containing an account

of the dinner, which was just about to come off, you remember, when I wrote to you from that city.

It was a most superb affair; and the speaking *admirable.* Indeed, the general talent for public speaking here is one of the most striking of the things that force themselves upon an Englishman's notice. As every man looks on to being a member of Congress, every man prepares himself for it; and the result is quite surprising. You will observe one odd custom, — the drinking of sentiments. It is quite extinct with us, but here everybody is expected to be prepared with an epigram as a matter of course.

We left Boston on the fifth, and went away with the governor of the city [1] to stay till Monday at his house at Worcester. He married a sister of Bancroft's, and another sister of Bancroft's went down with us. The village of Worcester is one of the prettiest in New England. . . . On Monday morning at nine o'clock we started again by railroad and went on to Springfield, where a deputation of two were waiting, and everything was in readiness that the utmost attention could suggest. Owing to the mildness of the weather, the Connecticut River was "open," videlicet not frozen, and they had a steamboat ready to carry us on to Hartford; thus saving a land journey of only twenty-five miles, but on such roads at this time of year that it takes nearly twelve hours to accomplish! The boat was very small, the river full of floating blocks of ice, and the depth where we went (to avoid the ice and the current) not more than a few inches. After two hours and a half of this queer travelling, we got to Hartford. There, there was quite an English inn; except in respect of the bedrooms, which are always uncomfortable; and the best committee of management that has yet presented itself. They kept us more quiet, and were more considerate and thoughtful, even to their own exclusion, than any I have yet had to deal with. Kate's face being horribly bad, I determined to give her a rest here; and accordingly wrote to get rid of my engagement at New Haven, on that plea. We remained in this town until the eleventh; holding a formal levee every day for two hours, and receiving on each from two hundred to three hundred people. At five o'clock on the afternoon of the eleventh, we set off (still by railroad) for New Haven, which we reached about eight o'clock. The moment

[1] That is, the governor of Massachusetts, John Davis.

we had had tea, we were forced to open another levee for the students and professors of the college (the largest in the States), and the townspeople. I suppose we shook hands, before going to bed, with considerably more than five hundred people; and I stood, as a matter of course, the whole time. . . .

Now, the deputation of two had come on with us from Hartford; and at New Haven there was another committee; and the immense fatigue and worry of all this, no words can exaggerate. We had been in the morning over jails and deaf and dumb asylums; had stopped on the journey at a place called Wallingford, where a whole town had turned out to see me, and to gratify whose curiosity the train stopped expressly; had had a day of great excitement and exertion on the Thursday (this being Friday); and were inexpressibly worn out. And when at last we got to bed and were "going" to fall asleep, the choristers of the college turned out in a body, under the window, and serenaded us! We had had, by the bye, another serenade at Hartford, from a Mr. Adams (a nephew of John Quincy Adams) and a German friend. *They* were most beautiful singers; and when they began, in the dead of the night, in a long, musical, echoing passage outside our chamber door; singing, in low voices to guitars, about home and absent friends and other topics that they knew would interest us, we were more moved than I can tell you. In the midst of my sentimentality, though, a thought occurred to me which made me laugh so immoderately that I was obliged to cover my face with the bedclothes. "Good Heavens!" I said to Kate, "what a monstrously ridiculous and commonplace appearance my boots must have, outside the door!" I never *was* so impressed with a sense of the absurdity of boots, in all my life.

The New Haven serenade was not so good; though there were a great many voices, and a "reg'lar" band. It had n't the heart of the other. Before it was six hours old we were dressing with might and main, and making ready for our departure; it being a drive of twenty minutes to the steamboat, and the hour of sailing nine o'clock. After a hasty breakfast we started off; and, after another levee on the deck (actually on the deck), and "three times three for Dickens," moved towards New York.

I was delighted to find on board a Mr. Felton whom I had known at Boston. He is the Greek professor at Cambridge, and was going on to the ball and dinner. Like most men of

his class whom I have seen, he is a most delightful fellow, — unaffected, hearty, genial, jolly; quite an Englishman of the best sort. We drank all the porter on board, ate all the cold pork and cheese, and were very merry indeed. I should have told you, in its proper place, that both at Hartford and New Haven a regular bank was subscribed, by these committees, for *all* my expenses. No bill was to be got at the bar, and everything was paid for. But as I would on no account suffer this to be done, I stoutly and positively refused to budge an inch until Mr. Q. should have received the bills from the landlord's own hands, and paid them to the last farthing. Finding it impossible to move me, they suffered me, most unwillingly, to carry the point.

About half-past two we arrived here. In half an hour more, we reached this hotel, where a very splendid suite of rooms was prepared for us; and where everything is very comfortable, and no doubt (as at Boston) *enormously* dear. Just as we sat down to dinner, David Colden made his appearance; and when he had gone, and we were taking our wine, Washington Irving came in alone, with open arms. And here he stopped, until ten o'clock at night. Having got so far, I shall divide my discourse into four points. First, the ball. Secondly, some slight specimens of a certain phase of character in the Americans. Thirdly, international copyright. Fourthly, my life here, and projects to be carried out while I remain.

Firstly, the ball. It came off last Monday (vide pamphlet). "At a quarter-past nine, exactly" (I quote the printed order of proceeding), we were waited upon by "David Colden, Esquire, and General George Morris;" habited, the former in full ball costume, the latter in the full-dress uniform of Heaven knows what regiment of militia. The general took Kate, Colden gave his arm to me, and we proceeded down stairs to a carriage at the door, which took us to the stage door of the theatre, greatly to the disappointment of an enormous crowd who were besetting the main door and making a most tremendous hullaballoo. The scene on our entrance was very striking. There were three thousand people present in full dress; from the roof to the floor, the theatre was decorated magnificently; and the light, glitter, glare, show, noise, and cheering, baffle my descriptive powers. We were walked in through the centre of the centre dress-box, the front whereof was taken out for the occasion; so

to the back of the stage, where the mayor and other dignitaries received us; and we were then paraded all round the enormous ballroom, twice, for the gratification of the many-headed. That done, we began to dance — Heaven knows how we did it, for there was no room. And we continued dancing until, being no longer able even to stand, we slipped away quietly, and came back to the hotel. All the documents connected with this extraordinary festival (quite unparalleled here) we have preserved; so you may suppose that on this head alone we shall have enough to show you when we come home. The bill of fare for supper is, in its amount and extent, quite a curiosity.

Now, the phase of character in the Americans which amuses me most was put before me in its most amusing shape by the circumstances attending this affair. I had noticed it before, and have since, but I cannot better illustrate it than by reference to this theme. Of course I can do nothing but in some shape or other it gets into the newspapers. All manner of lies get there, and occasionally a truth so twisted and distorted that it has as much resemblance to the real fact as Quilp's leg to Taglioni's. But with this ball to come off, the newspapers were if possible unusually loquacious; and in their accounts of me, and my seeings, sayings, and doings on the Saturday night and Sunday before, they describe my manner, mode of speaking, dressing, and so forth. In doing this, they report that I am a very charming fellow (of course), and have a very free and easy way with me; "which," say they, "at first amused a few fashionables," but soon pleased them exceedingly. Another paper, coming after the ball, dwells upon its splendour and brilliancy; hugs itself and its readers upon all that Dickens saw, and winds up by gravely expressing its conviction that Dickens was never in such society in England as he has seen in New York, and that its high and striking tone cannot fail to make an indelible impression on his mind! For the same reason I am always represented, whenever I appear in public, as being "very pale;" "apparently thunderstruck;" and utterly confounded by all I see. . . . You recognise the queer vanity which is at the root of all this? I have plenty of stories in connection with it to amuse you with when I return.

February 24, 1842.

It is unnecessary to say . . . that this letter *did n't* come by the sailing-packet, and *will* come by the Cunard boat.

After the ball I was laid up with a very bad sore throat, which confined me to the house four whole days; and as I was unable to write, or indeed to do anything but doze and drink lemonade, I missed the ship. . . . I have still a horrible cold, and so has Kate, but in other respects we are all right. I proceed to my third head — the international copyright question.

I believe there is no country on the face of the earth where there is less freedom of opinion on any subject in reference to which there is a broad difference of opinion than in this. — There! — I write the words with reluctance, disappointment, and sorrow; but I believe it from the bottom of my soul. I spoke, as you know, of international copyright, at Boston; and I spoke of it again at Hartford. My friends were paralysed with wonder at such audacious daring. The notion that I, a man alone by himself, in America, should venture to suggest to the Americans that there was one point on which they were neither just to their own countrymen nor to us, actually struck the boldest dumb! Washington Irving, Prescott, Hoffman, Bryant, Halleck, Dana, Washington Allston — every man who writes in this country is devoted to the question, and not one of them *dares* to raise his voice and complain of the atrocious state of the law. It is nothing that of all men living I am the greatest loser by it. It is nothing that I have a claim to speak and be heard. The wonder is that a breathing man can be found with temerity enough to suggest to the Americans the possibility of their having done wrong. I wish you could have seen the faces that I saw, down both sides of the table at Hartford, when I began to talk about Scott. I wish you could have heard how I gave it out. My blood so boiled as I thought of the monstrous injustice that I felt as if I were twelve feet high when I thrust it down their throats.

I had no sooner made that second speech than such an outcry began (for the purpose of deterring me from doing the like in this city) as an Englishman can form no notion of. Anonymous letters; verbal dissuasions; newspaper attacks making Colt (a murderer who is attracting great attention here) an angel by comparison with me; assertions that I was no gentleman, but a mere mercenary scoundrel; coupled with the most monstrous misrepresentations relative to my design and purpose in visiting the United States, came pouring in upon me every day. The dinner committee here (composed of the first gentle-

men in America, remember that) were so dismayed, that they besought me not to pursue the subject, *although they every one agreed with me.* I answered that I would. That nothing should deter me. . . . That the shame was theirs, not mine, and that as I would not spare them when I got home, I would not be silenced here. Accordingly, when the night came, I asserted my right, with all the means I could command to give it dignity, in face, manner, or words; and I believe that if you could have seen and heard me, you would have loved me better for it than ever you did in your life.

LIII. JOHN FORSTER

PHILADELPHIA, Sunday, March 6, 1842.

I have often asked Americans in London which were the better railroads, — ours or theirs? They have taken time for reflection, and generally replied on mature consideration that they rather thought we excelled; in respect of the punctuality with which we arrived at our stations, and the smoothness of our travelling. I wish you could see what an American railroad is, in some parts where I now have seen them. I won't say I wish you could feel what it is, because that would be an unchristian and savage aspiration. It is never inclosed, or warded off. You walk down the main street of a large town; and, slap-dash, headlong, pell-mell, down the middle of the street, with pigs burrowing, and boys flying kites and playing marbles, and men smoking, and women talking, and children crawling, close to the very rails, there comes tearing along a mad locomotive with its train of cars, scattering a red-hot shower of sparks (from its *wood* fire) in all directions; screeching, hissing, yelling, and panting; and nobody one atom more concerned than if it were a hundred miles away. You cross a turnpike road; and there is no gate, no policeman, no signal — nothing to keep the wayfarer or quiet traveller out of the way, but a wooden arch on which is written, in great letters, "Look out for the locomotive." And if any man, woman, or child don't look out, why, it 's his or her fault, and there 's an end of it.

The cars are like very shabby omnibuses, — only larger; holding sixty or seventy people. The seats, instead of being placed longways, are put cross-wise, back to front. Each holds

two. There is a long row of these on each side of the caravan, and a narrow passage up the centre. The windows are usually all closed, and there is very often, in addition, a hot, close, most intolerable charcoal stove in a red-hot glow. The heat and closeness are quite insupportable. But this is the characteristic of all American houses, of all the public institutions, chapels, theatres, and prisons. From the constant use of the hard anthracite coal in these beastly furnaces, a perfectly new class of diseases is springing up in the country. Their effect upon an Englishman is briefly told. He is always very sick and very faint; and has an intolerable headache, morning, noon, and night. . . .

LIV. C. C. FELTON

FULLER'S HOTEL, WASHINGTON, Monday, March 14, 1842.

MY DEAR FELTON, — I was more delighted than I can possibly tell you, to receive (last Saturday night) your welcome letter. We and the oysters missed you terribly in New York. You carried away with you more than half the delight and pleasure of my New World, and I heartily wish you could bring it back again.

There are very interesting men in this place, — highly interesting, of course, — but it 's not a comfortable place; is it? If spittle could wait at table we should be nobly attended, but as that property has not been imparted to it in the present state of mechanical science, we are rather lonely and orphan-like, in respect of "being looked arter." A blithe black was introduced on our arrival, as our peculiar and especial attendant. He is the only gentleman in the town who has a peculiar delicacy in intruding upon my valuable time. It usually takes seven rings and a threatening message from —— to produce him; and when he comes he goes to fetch something, and, forgetting it by the way, comes back no more.

We have been in great distress, really in distress, at the non-arrival of the Caledonia. You may conceive what our joy was when, while we were dining out yesterday, H. arrived with the joyful intelligence of her safety. The very news of her having really arrived seemed to diminish the distance between ourselves and home, by one half at least.

And this morning (though we have not yet received our heap

of despatches, for which we are looking eagerly forward to this night's mail) — this morning there reached us unexpectedly, through the Government bag (Heaven knows how they came there!), two of our many and long-looked-for letters, wherein was a circumstantial account of the whole conduct and behaviour of our pets; with marvellous narrations of Charley's precocity at a Twelfth Night juvenile party at Macready's; and tremendous predictions of the governess, dimly suggesting his having got out of pot-hooks and hangers, and darkly insinuating the possibility of his writing us a letter before long; and many other workings of the same prophetic spirit, in reference to him and his sisters, very gladdening to their mother's heart, and not at all depressing to their father's. There was, also, the doctor's report, which was a clean bill; and the nurse's report, which was perfectly electrifying; showing as it did how Master Walter had been weaned, and had cut a double tooth, and done many other extraordinary things, quite worthy of his high descent. In short, we were made very happy and grateful; and felt as if the prodigal father and mother had got home again.

What do you think of this incendiary card being left at my door last night? "General G. sends compliments to Mr. Dickens, and called with two literary ladies. As the two L. L.'s are ambitious of the honour of a personal introduction to Mr. D., General G. requests the honour of an appointment for to-morrow." I draw a veil over my sufferings. They are sacred. We shall be in Buffalo, please Heaven, on the 30th of April. If I don't find a letter from you in the care of the postmaster at that place, I'll never write to you from England. But if I *do* find one, my right hand shall forget its cunning, before I forget to be your truthful and constant correspondent; not, dear Felton, because I promised it, nor because I have a natural tendency to correspond (which is far from being the case), nor because I am truly grateful to you for, and have been made truly proud by, that affectionate and elegant tribute which —— sent me, but because you are a man after my own heart, and I love you *well*. And for the love I bear you, and the pleasure with which I shall always think of you, and the glow I shall feel when I see your handwriting in my own home, I hereby enter into a solemn league and covenant to write as many letters to you as you write to me, at least. Amen.

Come to England! Come to England! Our oysters are

small, I know: they are said by Americans to be coppery; but our hearts are of the largest size. We are thought to excel in shrimps, to be far from despicable in point of lobsters, and in periwinkles are considered to challenge the universe. Our oysters, small though they be, are not devoid of the refreshing influence which that species of fish is supposed to exercise in these latitudes. Try them and compare.

Affectionately yours.

LV. JOHN FORSTER

WASHINGTON, March 15, 1842.

I have the privilege of appearing on the floor of both Houses here, and go to them every day. They are very handsome and commodious. There is a great deal of bad speaking, but there are a great many very remarkable men in the legislature, such as John Quincy Adams, Clay, Preston, Calhoun, and others, with whom I need scarcely add I have been placed in the friendliest relations. Adams is a fine old fellow — seventy-six years old, but with most surprising vigour, memory, readiness, and pluck. Clay is perfectly enchanting; an irresistible man. There are some very notable specimens, too, out of the West. Splendid men to look at, hard to deceive, prompt to act, lions in energy, Crichtons in varied accomplishments, Indians in quickness of eye and gesture, Americans in affectionate and generous impulse. It would be difficult to exaggerate the nobility of some of these glorious fellows.

When Clay retires, as he does this month, Preston will become the leader of the Whig party. He so solemnly assures me that the international copyright shall and will be passed, that I almost begin to hope: and I shall be entitled to say, if it be, that I have brought it about. You have no idea how universal the discussion of its merits and demerits has become, or how eager for the change I have made a portion of the people.

You remember what —— was, in England. If you *could* but see him here! If you could only have seen him when he called on us the other day, — feigning abstraction in the dreadful pressure of affairs of state; rubbing his forehead as one who was aweary of the world; and exhibiting a sublime caricature of Lord Burleigh. He is the only thoroughly unreal man I have

seen on this side the ocean. Heaven help the President! All parties are against him, and he appears truly wretched. We go to a levee at his house to-night. He has invited me to dinner on Friday, but I am obliged to decline; for we leave, per steamboat, to-morrow night.

I said I would n't write anything more concerning the American people for two months. Second thoughts are best. I shall not change, and may as well speak out — to *you*. They are friendly, earnest, hospitable, kind, frank, very often accomplished, far less prejudiced than you would suppose, warm-hearted, fervent, and enthusiastic. They are chivalrous in their universal politeness to women, courteous, obliging, disinterested; and, when they conceive a perfect affection for a man (as I may venture to say of myself), entirely devoted to him. I have received thousands of people of all ranks and grades, and have never once been asked an offensive or unpolite question, — except by Englishmen, who, when they have been "located" here for some years, are worse than the devil in his blackest painting. The State is a parent to its people; has a parental care and watch over all poor children, women labouring of child, sick persons, and captives. The common men render you assistance in the streets, and would revolt from the offer of a piece of money. The desire to oblige is universal; and I have never once travelled in a public conveyance without making some generous acquaintance whom I have been sorry to part from, and who has in many cases come on miles, to see us again. But I don't like the country. I would not live here, on any consideration. It goes against the grain with me. It would with you. I think it impossible, utterly impossible, for any Englishman to live here and be happy. I have a confidence that I must be right, because I have everything, God knows, to lead me to the opposite conclusion; and yet I cannot resist coming to this one. As to the causes, they are too many to enter upon here. . . .

LVI. WASHINGTON IRVING

WASHINGTON, Monday Afternoon, March 21, 1842.

MY DEAR IRVING, — We passed through — literally passed through — this place again to-day. I did not come to see you, for I really have not the heart to say "good-bye" again,

and felt more than I can tell you when we shook hands last Wednesday.

You will not be at Baltimore, I fear? I thought, at the time, that you only said you might be there, to make our parting the gayer.

Wherever you go, God bless you! What pleasure I have had in seeing and talking with you, I will not attempt to say. I shall never forget it as long as I live. What would I give, if we could have but a quiet week together! Spain is a lazy place, and its climate an indolent one. But if you have ever leisure under its sunny skies to think of a man who loves you, and holds communion with your spirit oftener, perhaps, than any other person alive, — leisure from listlessness, I mean, — and will write to me in London, you will give me an inexpressible amount of pleasure.

Your affectionate friend.

LVII. W. C. MACREADY

BALTIMORE, March 22, 1842.

MY DEAR FRIEND, — I beg your pardon, but you were speaking of rash leaps at hasty conclusions. Are you quite sure you designed that remark for me? Have you not, in the hurry of correspondence, slipped a paragraph into my letter which belongs of right to somebody else? When did you ever find me leap at wrong conclusions. I pause for a reply.

Pray, sir, did you ever find me admiring Mr. ——? On the contrary, did you never hear of my protesting through good, better, and best report that he was not an open or a candid man, and would one day, beyond all doubt, displease you by not being so? I pause again for a reply.

Are you quite sure, Mr. Macready, — and I address myself to you with the sternness of a man in the pit, — are you quite sure, sir, that you do not view America through the pleasant mirage which often surrounds a thing that has been, but not a thing that is? Are you quite sure that when you were here you relished it as well as you do now when you look back upon it. The early spring birds, Mr. Macready, *do* sing in the groves that you were, very often, not over well pleased with many of the new country's social aspects. Are the birds to be trusted? I pause for a reply.

My dear Macready, I desire to be so honest and just to those who have so enthusiastically and earnestly welcomed me, that I burned the last letter I wrote to you — even to you to whom I would speak as to myself — rather than let it come with anything that might seem like an ill-considered word of disappointment. I preferred that you should think me neglectful (if you could imagine anything so wild) rather than I should do wrong in this respect. Still it is of no use. I *am* disappointed. This is not the republic I came to see; this is not the republic of my imagination. I infinitely prefer a liberal monarchy — even with its sickening accompaniments of court circulars — to such a government as this. The more I think of its youth and strength, the poorer and more trifling in a thousand aspects it appears in my eyes. In everything of which it has made a boast — excepting its education of the people and its care for poor children — it sinks immeasurably below the level I had placed it upon; and England, even England, bad and faulty as the old land is, and miserable as millions of her people are, rises in the comparison.

You live here, Macready, as I have sometimes heard you imagining! *You!* Loving you with all my heart and soul, and knowing what your disposition really is, I would not condemn you to a year's residence on this side of the Atlantic for any money. Freedom of opinion! Where is it? I see a press more mean, and paltry, and silly, and disgraceful than any country I ever knew. If that is its standard, here it is. But I speak of Bancroft, and am advised to be silent on that subject, for he is "a black sheep — a Democrat." I speak of Bryant, and am entreated to be more careful, for the same reason. I speak of international copyright, and am implored not to ruin myself outright. I speak of Miss Martineau, and all parties — Slave Upholders and Abolitionists, Whigs, Tyler Whigs, and Democrats — shower down upon me a perfect cataract of abuse. "But what has she done? Surely she praised America enough!" — "Yes, but she told us of some of our faults, and Americans can't bear to be told of their faults. Don't split on that rock, Mr. Dickens; don't write about America; we are so very suspicious."

Freedom of opinion! Macready, if I had been born here and had written my books in this country, producing them with no stamp of approval from any other land, it is my solemn be-

lief that I should have lived and died poor, unnoticed, and a "black sheep" to boot. I never was more convinced of anything than I am of that.

The people are affectionate, generous, open-hearted, hospitable, enthusiastic, good-humoured, polite to women, frank and candid to all strangers, anxious to oblige, far less prejudiced than they have been described to be, frequently polished and refined, very seldom rude or disagreeable. I have made a great many friends here, even in public conveyances, whom I have been truly sorry to part from. In the towns I have formed perfect attachments. I have seen none of that greediness and indecorousness on which travellers have laid so much emphasis. I have returned frankness with frankness; met questions not intended to be rude, with answers meant to be satisfactory; and have not spoken to one man, woman, or child of any degree who has not grown positively affectionate before we parted. In the respects of not being left alone, and of being horribly disgusted by tobacco chewing and tobacco spittle, I have suffered considerably. The sight of slavery in Virginia, the hatred of British feeling upon the subject, and the miserable hints of the impotent indignation of the South have pained me very much; on the last head, of course I have felt nothing but a mingled pity and amusement; on the other, sheer distress. But however much I like the ingredients of this great dish, I cannot but come back to the point upon which I started, and say that the dish itself goes against the grain with me, and that I don't like it.

You know that I am truly a Liberal. I believe I have as little pride as most men, and I am conscious of not the smallest annoyance from being "hail fellow well met" with everybody. I have not had greater pleasure in the company of any set of men among the thousands I have received (I hold a regular levee every day, you know, which is duly heralded and proclaimed in the newspapers) than in that of the carmen of Hartford, who presented themselves in a body in their blue frocks, among a crowd of well-dressed ladies and gentlemen, and bade me welcome through their spokesman. They had all read my books, and all perfectly understood them. It is not these things I have in my mind when I say that the man who comes to this country a Radical and goes home again with his opinions unchanged, must be a Radical on reason, sympathy, and reflec-

tion, and one who has so well considered the subject that he has no chance of wavering.

We have been to Boston, Worcester, Hartford, New Haven, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington, Fredericksburg, Richmond, and back to Washington again. The premature heat of the weather (it was eighty yesterday in the shade) and Clay's advice — how you would like Clay! — have made us determine not to go to Charleston; but having got to Richmond, I think I should have turned back under any circumstances. We remain at Baltimore for two days, of which this is one; then we go to Harrisburg. Then by the canal-boat and the railroad over the Alleghany Mountains to Pittsburg, then down the Ohio to Cincinnati, then to Louisville, and then to St. Louis. I have been invited to a public entertainment in every town I have entered, and have refused them; but I have excepted St. Louis as the farthest point of my travels. My friends there have passed some resolutions which Forster has, and will show you. From St. Louis we cross to Chicago, traversing immense prairies. Thence by the lakes and Detroit to Buffalo, and so to Niagara. A run into Canada follows of course, and then — let me write the blessed word in capitals — we turn towards HOME.

Kate has written to Mrs. Macready, and it is useless for me to thank you, my dearest friend, or her, for your care of our dear children, which is our constant theme of discourse. Forster has gladdened our hearts with his account of the triumph of "Acis and Galatea," and I am anxiously looking for news of the tragedy. Forrest breakfasted with us at Richmond last Saturday, — he was acting there, and I invited him, — and he spoke very gratefully, and very like a man, of your kindness to him when he was in London.

David Colden is as good a fellow as ever lived; and I am deeply in love with his wife. Indeed, we have received the greatest and most earnest and zealous kindness from the whole family, and quite love them all. Do you remember one Greenhow, whom you invited to pass some days with you at the hotel on the Kaatskill Mountains? He is translator to the State Office at Washington, has a very pretty wife, and a little girl of five years old. We dined with them, and had a very pleasant day. The President invited me to dinner, but I could n't stay for it. I had a private audience, however, and we attended the public drawing-room besides.

Now, don't you rush at the quick conclusion [illegible] rushed at a quick conclusion. Pray, be upon your [illegible] you can by any process estimate the extent of my [illegible] regard for you, and the rush I shall make when I [illegible] to take you by your true right hand, I don't object [illegible] me entreat you to be very careful how you come [illegible] the sharp-sighted individual who pens these words, [illegible] seem to me to have done in what Willmott would [illegible] Mr. Macready's rushes." As my pen is getting pa[illegible] I have taken a new one to say that

I am ever, my dear Macready,

Your faithful [illegible]

LVIII. THOMAS MITTON

BALTIMORE, UNITED STATES, MA[illegible]

MY DEAR FRIEND, — We have been as far south [illegible] mond in Virginia (where they grow and manufactur[illegible] and where the labour is all performed by slaves), but [illegible] in those latitudes is so intensely and prematurely b[illegible] was considered a [illegible] doubtful expediency to [illegible] Charleston. For th[illegible] ted reason, and because [illegible] try between Richm[illegible] arleston is but a desol[illegible] the whole way, and [illegible] very is anything but [illegible] thing to live amidst [illegible] tered my route by the [illegible] Mr. Clay (the great [illegible] der in this country), [illegible] returned here prev[illegible] into [illegible] West. [illegible] for that part of the [illegible] mounta[illegible] ling, and lake trav[illegible] — the [illegible] to-morrow, at eigh[illegible] and shall [illegible] West, and from th[illegible] until th[illegible] April or 1st of Ma[illegible] a week at [illegible] before going furth[illegible] taken ou[illegible] home (God bless [illegible] ship from New Yo[illegible]

I have departed [illegible] public entertainme[illegible] I have visited — in [illegible] western point. T[illegible] ritory, a trifling di[illegible] miles! At my se[illegible]

fix the day; I suppose it will be somewhere about the 12th of April. Think of my going so far towards the setting sun to dinner!

In every town where we stay, though it be only for a day, we hold a regular levee or drawing-room, where I shake hands on an average with five or six hundred people, who pass on from me to Kate, and are shaken again by her. Maclise's picture of our darling stands upon a table or sideboard the while; and my travelling secretary, assisted very often by a committee belonging to the place, presents the people in due form. Think of two hours of this every day, and the people coming in by hundreds, all fresh, and piping hot, and full of questions, when we are literally exhausted and can hardly stand. I really do believe that if I had not a lady with me, I should have been obliged to leave the country and go back to England. But for her they never would leave me alone by day or night, and as it is, a slave comes to me now and then in the middle of the night with a letter, and waits at the bedroom door for an answer.

It was so hot at Richmond that we could scarcely breathe, and the peach and other fruit trees were in full blossom; it was so cold at Washington next day that we were shivering; but even in the same town you might often wear nothing but a shirt and trousers in the morning, and two great-coats at night, the thermometer very frequently taking a little trip of thirty degrees between sunrise and sunset.

They do lay it on at the hotels in such style! They charge by the day, so that whether one dines out or dines at home makes no manner of difference. T' other day I wrote to order our rooms at Philadelphia to be ready on a certain day, and was detained a week longer than I expected in New York. The Philadelphia landlord not only charged me half rent for the rooms during the whole of that time, but board for myself and Kate and Anne during the whole time too, though we were actually boarding at the same expense during the same time in New York! What do you say to that? If I remonstrated, the whole virtue of the newspapers would be aroused directly.

We were at the President's drawing-room while we were in Washington. I had a private audience besides, and was asked to dinner, but could n't stay.

Parties — parties — parties — of course, every day and night. But it 's not all parties. I go into the prisons, the police-offices,

the watch-houses, the hospitals, the workhouses. I was out half the night in New York with two of their most famous constables; started at midnight, and went into every brothel, thieves' house, murdering hovel, sailors' dancing-place, and abode of villainy, both black and white, in the town. I went *incog.* behind the scenes to the little theatre where Mitchell is making a fortune. He has been rearing a little dog for me, and has called him "Boz." I am going to bring him home. In a word I go everywhere, and a hard life it is. But I am careful to drink hardly anything, and not to smoke at all. I have recourse to my medicine-chest whenever I feel at all bilious, and am, thank God, thoroughly well.

When I next write to you, I shall have begun, I hope, to turn my face homeward. I have a great store of oddity and whimsicality, and am going now into the oddest and most characteristic part of this most queer country.

Always direct to the care of David Colden, Esq., 28 Laight Street, Hudson Square, New York. I received your Caledonia letter with the greatest joy.

Kate sends her best remembrances.

And I am always.

LIX. JOHN FORSTER

TUESDAY, April 26, 1842.

NIAGARA FALLS ! ! ! (UPON THE ENGLISH [1] SIDE.)

I don't know at what length I might have written you from Sandusky, my beloved friend, if a steamer had not come in sight just as I finished the last unintelligible sheet (oh! the ink in these parts!); whereupon I was obliged to pack up bag and baggage, to swallow a hasty apology for a dinner, and to hurry my train on board with all the speed I might. She was a fine steamship, four hundred tons burden, name the Constitution, had very few passengers on board, and had bountiful and handsome accommodation. It 's all very fine talking about Lake Erie, but it won't do for persons who are liable to sea-sickness. We were all sick. It 's almost as bad in that respect as the Atlantic. The waves are very short, and horribly constant. We reached Buffalo at six this morning; went ashore to breakfast; sent to the post-office forthwith; and received — oh! who or what can say with how much pleasure and what unspeakable delight! — our English letters!

[1] Ten dashes underneath the word.

We lay all Sunday night at a town (and a beautiful town too) called Cleveland; on Lake Erie. The people poured on board, in crowds, by six on Monday morning, to see me; and a party of "gentlemen" actually planted themselves before our little cabin, and stared in at the door and windows *while I was washing, and Kate lay in bed.* I was so incensed at this, and at a certain newspaper published in that town which I had accidentally seen in Sandusky (advocating war with England to the death, saying that Britain must be "whipped again," and promising all true Americans that within two years they should sing Yankee Doodle in Hyde Park and Hail Columbia in the courts of Westminster), that when the mayor came on board to present himself to me, according to custom, I refused to see him, and bade Mr. Q. tell him why and wherefore. His honour took it very coolly, and retired to the top of the wharf, with a big stick and a whittling knife, with which he worked so lustily (staring at the closed door of our cabin all the time) that long before the boat left, the big stick was no bigger than a cribbage-peg!

I never in my life was in such a state of excitement as coming from Buffalo here, this morning. You come by railroad, and are nigh two hours upon the way. I looked out for the spray, and listened for the roar, as far beyond the bounds of possibility as though, landing in Liverpool, I were to listen for the music of your pleasant voice in Lincoln's Inn Fields. At last, when the train stopped, I saw two great white clouds rising up from the depth of the earth, — nothing more. They rose up slowly, gently, majestically, into the air. I dragged Kate down a deep and slippery path leading to the ferry-boat; bullied Anne for not coming fast enough; perspired at every pore; and felt, it is impossible to say how, as the sound grew louder and louder in my ears, and yet nothing could be seen for the mist.

There were two English officers with us (ah! what *gentlemen*, what noblemen of nature they seemed), and they hurried off with me; leaving Kate and Anne on a crag of ice; and clambered after me over the rocks at the foot of the small Fall, while the ferryman was getting the boat ready. I was not disappointed — but I could make out nothing. In an instant I was blinded by the spray, and wet to the skin. I saw the water tearing madly down from some immense height, but could get no idea of shape, or situation, or anything but vague immensity. But when we were seated in the boat, and crossing at the very

foot of the cataract — then I began to feel what it was. Directly I had changed my clothes at the inn I went out again, taking Kate with me, and hurried to the Horseshoe Fall. I went down alone into the very basin. It would be hard for a man to stand nearer God than he does there. There was a bright rainbow at my feet; and from that I looked up to — great Heaven! to *what* a fall of bright green water! The broad, deep, mighty stream seems to die in the act of falling; and from its unfathomable grave arises that tremendous ghost of spray and mist which is never laid, and has been haunting this place with the same dread solemnity — perhaps from the creation of the world.

We propose remaining here a week. In my next I will try to give you some idea of my impressions, and to tell you how they change with every day. At present it is impossible. I can only say that the first effect of this tremendous spectacle on me was peace of mind — tranquillity — great thoughts of eternal rest and happiness — nothing of terror. I can shudder at the recollection of Glencoe (dear friend, with Heaven's leave we must see Glencoe together), but whenever I think of Niagara I shall think of its beauty.

If you could hear the roar that is in my ears as I write this. Both Falls are under our windows. From our sitting-room and bedroom we look down straight upon them. There is not a soul in the house but ourselves. What would I give if you and Mac were here to share the sensations of this time! I was going to add, what would I give if the dear girl whose ashes lie in Kensal Green had lived to come so far along with us — but she has been here many times, I doubt not, since her sweet face faded from my earthly sight. . . .

LX. HENRY AUSTIN

NIAGARA FALLS (English Side), Sunday, May 1, 1842.

MY DEAR HENRY, — Although I date this letter as above, it will not be so old a one as at first sight it would appear to be when it reaches you. I shall carry it on with me to Montreal, and despatch it from there by the steamer which goes to Halifax, to meet the Cunard boat at that place, with Canadian letters and passengers. Before I finally close it, I will add a short postscript, so that it will contain the latest intelligence.

We have had a blessed interval of quiet in this beautiful place, of which, as you may suppose, we stood greatly in need, not only by reason of our hard travelling for a long time, but on account of the incessant persecutions of the people, by land and water, on stage-coach, railway car, and steamer, which exceeds anything you can picture to yourself by the utmost stretch of your imagination. So far we have had this hotel nearly to ourselves. It is a large square house, standing on a bold height, with overhanging eaves like a Swiss cottage, and a wide handsome gallery outside every story. These colonnades make it look so very light that it has exactly the appearance of a house built with a pack of cards; and I live in bodily terror lest any man should venture to step out of a little observatory on the roof, and crush the whole structure with one stamp of his foot.

Our sitting-room (which is large and low like a nursery) is on the second floor, and is so close to the Falls that the windows are always wet and dim with spray. Two bedrooms open out of it — one our own; one Anne's. The secretary slumbers near at hand, but without these sacred precincts. From the three chambers, or any part of them, you can see the Falls rolling and tumbling, and roaring and leaping, all day long, with bright rainbows making fiery arches down a hundred feet below us. When the sun is on them, they shine and glow like molten gold. When the day is gloomy, the water falls like snow, or sometimes it seems to crumble away like the face of a great chalk cliff, or sometimes again to roll along the front of the rock like white smoke. But it all seems gay or gloomy, dark or light, by sun or moon. From the bottom of both Falls, there is always rising up a solemn ghostly cloud, which hides the boiling caldon from human sight, and makes it in its mystery a hundred times more grand than if you could see all the secrets that lie hidden in its tremendous depth. One Fall is as close to us as York Gate is to No. 1, Devonshire Terrace. The other (the great Horseshoe Fall) may be, perhaps, about half as far off as "Creedy's."[1] One circumstance in connection with them is, in all the accounts, greatly exaggerated — I mean the noise. Last night was perfectly still. Kate and I could just hear them, at the quiet time of sunset, a mile off.

[1] Mr. Macready's — so pronounced by one of Charles Dickens's little children.

Whereas, believing the statements I had heard I began putting my ear to the ground, like a savage or a bandit in a ballet, thirty miles off, when we were coming here from Buffalo.

I was delighted to receive your famous letter, and to read your account of our darlings, whom we long to see with an intensity it is impossible to shadow forth, ever so faintly. I do believe, though I say it as should n't, that they are good 'uns — both to look at and to go. I roared out this morning, as soon as I was awake, "Next month," which we have been longing to be able to say ever since we have been here. I really do not know how we shall ever knock at the door, when that slowest of all impossibly slow hackney-coaches shall pull up — at home.

I am glad you exult in the fight I have had about the copyright. If you knew how they tried to stop me, you would have a still greater interest in it. The greatest men in England have sent me out, through Forster, a very manly, and becoming, and spirited memorial and address, backing me in all I have done. I have despatched it to Boston for publication, and am coolly prepared for the storm it will raise. But my best rod is in pickle.

Is it not a horrible thing that scoundrel book-sellers should grow rich here from publishing books, the authors of which do not reap one farthing from their issue by scores of thousands; and that every vile, blackguard, and detestable newspaper, so filthy and bestial that no honest man would admit one into his house for a scullery door-mat, should be able to publish those same writings side by side, cheek by jowl, with the coarsest and most obscene companions, with which they must become connected, in course of time, in people's minds? Is it tolerable that besides being robbed and rifled an author should be forced to appear in any form, in any vulgar dress, in any atrocious company; that he should have no choice of his audience, no control over his own distorted text, and that he should be compelled to jostle out of the course the best men in this country who only ask to live by writing? I vow before high heaven that my blood so boils at these enormities, that when I speak about them I seem to grow twenty feet high, and to swell out in proportion. "Robbers that ye are," I think to myself when I get upon my legs, "here goes!"

The places we have lodged in, the roads we have gone over,

the company we have been among, the tobacco-spittle we have wallowed in, the strange customs we have complied with, the packing-cases in which we have travelled, the woods, swamps, rivers, prairies, lakes, and mountains we have crossed, are all subjects for legends and tales at home; quires, reams, would n't hold them. I don't think Anne has so much as seen an American tree. She never looks at a prospect by any chance, or displays the smallest emotion at any sight whatever. She objects to Niagara that "it 's nothing but water," and considers that "there is too much of that."

I suppose you have heard that I am going to act at the Montreal theatre with the officers? Farce-books being scarce, and the choice consequently limited, I have selected Keeley's part in "Two O'clock in the Morning." I wrote yesterday to Mitchell, the actor and manager at New York, to get and send me a comic wig, light flaxen, with a small whisker halfway down the cheek; over this I mean to wear two nightcaps, one with a tassel and one of flannel; a flannel wrapper, drab tights, and slippers, will complete the costume.

I am very sorry to hear that business is so flat, but the proverb says it never rains but it pours, and it may be remarked with equal truth upon the other side, that it never *don't* rain but it holds up very much indeed. You will be busy again long before I come home, I have no doubt.

We purpose leaving this on Wednesday morning. Give my love to Letitia and to mother, and always believe me, my dear Henry, Affectionately yours.

LXI. C. C. FELTON

MONTREAL, Saturday, 21st May, 1842.

MY DEAR FELTON, — I was delighted to receive your letter yesterday, and was well pleased with its contents. I anticipated objection to Carlyle's[1] letter. I called particular attention to it for three reasons. Firstly, because he boldly *said* what all the others *think*, and therefore deserved to be manfully supported. Secondly, because it is my deliberate opinion that I have been assailed on this subject in a manner in which no man with any pretentions to public respect, or with the remotest right to express an opinion on a subject of universal literary interest, would be assailed in any other country. . . .

[1] On the subject of International Copyright.

I really cannot sufficiently thank you, dear Felton, for your warm and hearty interest in these proceedings. But it would be idle to pursue that theme, so let it pass.

The wig and whiskers are in a state of the highest preservation. The play comes off next Wednesday night, the 25th. What would I give to see you in the front row of the centre box, your spectacles gleaming not unlike those of my dear friend Pickwick, your face radiant with as broad a grin as a staid professor may indulge in, and your very coat, waistcoat, and shoulders expressive of what we should take together when the performance was over! I would give something (not so much, but still a good round sum) if you could only stumble into that very dark and dusty theatre in the daytime (at any minute between twelve and three), and see me with my coat off, the stage manager and universal director, urging impracticable ladies and impossible gentlemen on to the very confines of insanity, shouting and driving about, in my own person, to an extent which would justify any philanthropic stranger in clapping me into a strait-waistcoat without further inquiry, endeavouring to goad H. into some dim and faint understanding of a prompter's duties, and struggling in such a vortex of noise, dirt, bustle, confusion, and inextricable entanglement of speech and action as you would grow giddy in contemplating. We perform "A Roland for an Oliver," "A Good Night's Rest," and "Deaf as a Post." This kind of voluntary hard labour used to be my great delight. The *furor* has come strong upon me again, and I begin to be once more of opinion that nature intended me for the lessee of a national theatre, and that pen, ink, and paper have spoiled a manager.

Oh, how I look forward across that rolling water to home and its small tenantry! How I busy myself in thinking how my books look, and where the tables are, and in what positions the chairs stand relatively to the other furniture; and whether we shall get there in the night, or in the morning, or in the afternoon; and whether we shall be able to surprise them, or whether they will be too sharply looking out for us; and what our pets will say; and how they 'll look, and who will be the first to come and shake hands, and so forth! If I could but tell you how I have set my heart on rushing into Forster's study (he is my great friend, and writes at the bottom of all his letters: "My love to Felton"), and into Maclise's painting-

room, and into Macready's managerial ditto, without a moment's warning, and how I picture every little trait and circumstance of our arrival to myself, down to the very colour of the bow on the cook's cap, you would almost think I had changed places with my eldest son, and was still in pantaloons of the thinnest texture. I left all these things — God only knows what a love I have for them — as coolly and calmly as any animated cucumber; but when I come upon them again I shall have lost all power of self-restraint, and shall as certainly make a fool of myself (in the popular meaning of that expression) as ever Grimaldi did in his way, or George the Third in his.

And not the less so, dear Felton, for having found some warm hearts, and left some instalments of earnest and sincere affection, behind me on this continent. And whenever I turn my mental telescope hitherward, trust me that one of the first figures it will descry will wear spectacles so like yours that the maker could n't tell the difference, and shall address a Greek class in such an exact imitation of your voice, that the very students hearing it should cry, "That 's he! Three cheers. Hoo-ray-ay-ay-ay-ay!"

About those joints of yours, I think you are mistaken. They *can't* be stiff. At the worst they merely want the air of New York, which, being impregnated with the flavour of last year's oysters, has a surprising effect in rendering the human frame supple and flexible in all cases of rust.

A terrible idea occurred to me as I wrote those words. The oyster-cellars — what do they do when oysters are not in season? Is pickled salmon vended there? Do they sell crabs, shrimps, winkles, herrings? The oyster-openers — what do *they* do? Do they commit suicide in despair, or wrench open tight drawers and cupboards and hermetically sealed bottles for practice? Perhaps they are dentists out of the oyster season. Who knows?

Affectionately yours.

LXII. C. C. FELTON

1, Devonshire Terrace, York Gate, Regent's Park,
London, Sunday, July 31, 1842.

My dear Felton, — Of all the monstrous and incalculable amount of occupation that ever beset one unfortunate man, mine has been the most stupendous since I came home. The dinners

I have had to eat, the places I have had to go to, the letters I have had to answer, the sea of business and of pleasure in which I have been plunged, not even the genius of an —— or the pen of a —— could describe.

Wherefore I indite a monstrously short and wildly uninteresting epistle to the American Dando; but perhaps you don't know who Dando was. He was an oyster-eater, my dear Felton. He used to go into oyster-shops, without a farthing of money, and stand at the counter eating natives, until the man who opened them grew pale, cast down his knife, staggered backward, struck his white forehead with his open hand, and cried, "You are Dando!!!" He has been known to eat twenty dozen at one sitting, and would have eaten forty if the truth had not flashed upon the shop-keeper. For these offences he was constantly committed to the House of Correction. During his last imprisonment he was taken ill, got worse and worse, and at last began knocking violent double knocks at Death's door. The doctor stood beside his bed, with his fingers on his pulse. "He is going," says the doctor. "I see it in his eye. There is only one thing that would keep life in him for another hour, and that is — oysters." They were immediately brought. Dando swallowed eight, and feebly took a ninth. He held it in his mouth and looked round the bed strangely. "Not a bad one, is it?" says the doctor. The patient shook his head, rubbed his trembling hand upon his stomach, bolted the oyster, and fell back — dead. They buried him in the prison-yard, and paved his grave with oyster-shells.

We are all well and hearty, and have already begun to wonder what time next year you and Mrs. Felton and Dr. Howe will come across the briny sea together. To-morrow we go to the seaside for two months. I am looking out for news of Longfellow, and shall be delighted when I know that he is on his way to London and this house.

I am bent upon striking at the piratical newspapers with the sharpest edge I can put upon my small axe, and hope in the next session of Parliament to stop their entrance into Canada. For the first time within the memory of man, the professors of English literature seem disposed to act together on this question. It is a good thing to aggravate a scoundrel, if one can do nothing else, and I think we *can* make them smart a little in this way. . . .

I wish you had been at Greenwich the other day, where a party of friends gave me a private dinner; public ones I have refused. C—— was perfectly wild at the reunion, and, after singing all manner of marine songs, wound up the entertainment by coming home (six miles) in a little open phaeton of mine *on his head*, to the mingled delight and indignation of the metropolitan police. We were very jovial indeed; and I assure you that I drank your health with fearful vigour and energy.

On board that ship coming home I established a club, called the United Vagabonds, to the large amusement of the rest of the passengers. This holy brotherhood committed all kinds of absurdities, and dined always, with a variety of solemn forms, at one end of the table, below the mast, away from all the rest. The captain being ill when we were three or four days out, I produced my medicine-chest and recovered him. We had a few more sick men after that, and I went round "the wards" every day in great state, accompanied by two Vagabonds, habited as Ben Allen and Bob Sawyer, bearing enormous rolls of plaster and huge pairs of scissors. We were really very merry all the way, breakfasted in one party at Liverpool, shook hands, and parted most cordially. . . .

Affectionately your faithful friend.

LXIII. JOHN FORSTER

BROADSTAIRS, August 7, 1842.

I have been reading Tennyson all this morning on the seashore. Among other trifling effects, the waters have dried up as they did of old, and shown me all the mermen and mermaids, at the bottom of the ocean; together with millions of queer creatures, half fish and half fungus, looking down into all manner of coral caves and seaweed conservatories; and staring in with their great dull eyes at every open nook and loophole. Who else, too, could conjure up such a close to the extraordinary and as Landor would say "most wonderful" series of pictures in the "dream of fair women," as —

> "Squadrons and squares of men in brazen plates,
> Scaffolds, still sheets of water, divers woes,
> Ranges of glimmering vaults with iron grates,
> And hushed seraglios!"

I am getting on pretty well, but it was so glittering and sun-

shiny yesterday that I was forced to make holiday. . . . [Four days later.] I have not written a word this blessed day. I got to New York yesterday, and think it goes as it should. . . . Little doggy improves rapidly, and now jumps over my stick at the word of command. I have changed his name to Snittle Timbery, as more sonorous and expressive. He unites with the rest of the family in cordial regards and loves. *Nota Bene.* The Margate theatre is open every evening, and the Four Patagonians (see Goldsmith's "Essays") are performing thrice a week at Ranelagh. . . .

LXIV. C. C. FELTON

1, Devonshire Terrace, York Gate, Regent's Park,
London, September 1, 1842.

My dear Felton, — Of course that letter in the papers was as foul a forgery as ever felon swung for. . . . I have not contradicted it publicly, nor shall I. When I tilt at such wringings out of the dirtiest mortality, I shall be another man — indeed, almost the creature they would make me.

I gave your message to Forster, who sends a despatch-box full of kind remembrances in return. He is in a great state of delight with the first volume of my American book (which I have just finished), and swears loudly by it. It is *True* and Honourable I know, and I shall hope to send it you, complete, by the first steamer in November.

Your description of the porter and the carpet-bags prepares me for a first-rate facetious novel, brimful of the richest humour, on which I have no doubt you are engaged. What is it called? Sometimes I imagine the title-page thus: —

Oysters
in
Every Style;
or,
Openings
of
Life.
by
Young Dando.

As to the man putting the luggage on his head, as a sort of sign, I adopt it from this hour.

I date this from London, where I have come, as a good profligate, graceless bachelor, for a day or two; leaving my wife and babbies at the seaside. . . . Heavens! if you were but here at this minute! A piece of salmon and a steak are cooking in the kitchen; it 's a very wet day, and I have had a fire lighted; the wine sparkles on a side table; the room looks the more snug from being the only *un*dismantled one in the house; plates are warming for Forster and Maclise, whose knock I am momentarily expecting; that groom I told you of, who never comes into the house, except when we are all out of town, is walking about in his shirt-sleeves without the smallest consciousness of impropriety; a great mound of proofs are waiting to be read aloud, after dinner. With what a shout I would clap you down into the easiest chair, my genial Felton, if you could but appear, and order you a pair of slippers instantly!

Since I have written this, the aforesaid groom — a very small man (as the fashion is), with fiery red hair (as the fashion is *not*) — has looked very hard at me and fluttered about me at the same time, like a giant butterfly. After a pause, he says, in a Sam Wellerish kind of way: "I vent to the club this mornin', sir. There vorn't no letters, sir." "Very good, Topping." "How 's missis, sir?" "Pretty well, Topping." "Glad to hear it, sir. *My* missis ain't wery well, sir." "No!" "No, sir, she 's a goin', sir, to have a hincrease wery soon, and it makes her rather nervous, sir; and ven a young voman gets at all down at sich a time, sir, she goes down wery deep, sir." To this sentiment I replied affirmatively, and then he adds, as he stirs the fire (as if he were thinking out loud): "Wot a mystery it is! Wot a go is natur'!" With which scrap of philosophy, he gradually gets nearer to the door, and so fades out of the room.

This same man asked me one day, soon after I came home, what Sir John Wilson was. This is a friend of mine, who took our house and servants, and everything as it stood, during our absence in America. I told him an officer. "A wot, sir?" "An officer." And then, for fear he should think I meant a police-officer, I added, "An officer in the army." "I beg your pardon, sir," he said, touching his hat, "but the club as I always drove him to wos the United Servants."

The real name of this club is the United Service, but I have no doubt he thought it was a high-life-below-stairs kind of resort,

and that this gentleman was a retired butler or superannuated footman.

There 's the knock, and the Great Western sails, or steams rather, to-morrow. Write soon again, dear Felton, and ever believe me, . . .

Your affectionate friend.

LXV. HENRY AUSTIN

BROADSTAIRS, Sunday, September 25, 1842.

MY DEAR HENRY, — I inclose you the Niagara letter, with many thanks for the loan of it.

Pray tell Mr. Chadwick that I am greatly obliged to him for his remembrance of me, and I heartily concur with him in the great importance and interest of the subject, though I do differ from him, to the death, on his crack topic — the New Poor Law.

I have been turning my thoughts to this very item in the condition of American towns, and had put their present aspects strongly before the American people; therefore I shall read his report with the greater interest and attention.

We return next Saturday night.

If you will dine with us next day or any day in the week, we shall be truly glad and delighted to see you. Let me know, then, what day you will come.

I need scarcely say that I shall joyfully talk with you about the Metropolitan Improvement Society, then or at any time; and with love to Letitia, in which Kate and the babies join, I am always, my dear Henry,

Affectionately yours.

P. S. — The children's present names are as follows: —

Katey (from a lurking propensity to fieryness), Lucifer Box.

Mamey (as generally descriptive of her bearing), Mild Glo'ster.

Charley (as a corruption of Master Toby), Flaster Floby.

Walter (suggested by his high cheek-bones), Young Skull.

Each is pronounced with a peculiar howl, which I shall have great pleasure in illustrating.

LXVI. THOMAS HOOD

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, November 30, 1842.

MY DEAR HOOD, — In asking your and Mrs. Hood's leave to bring Mrs. D.'s sister (who stays with us) on Tuesday, let me add that I should very much like to bring at the same time a very unaffected and ardent admirer of your genius, who has no small portion of that commodity in his own right, and is a very dear friend of mine and a very famous fellow; to wit, Maclise, the painter, who would be glad (as he has often told me) to know you better, and would be much pleased, I know, if I could say to him, "Hood wants me to bring you."

I use so little ceremony with you, in the conviction that you will use as little with me, and say, "My dear D. — Convenient;" or, "My dear D. — Ill-convenient" (as the popular phrase is), just as the case may be. Of course, I have said nothing to him. Always heartily yours,

BOZ.

LXVII. MRS. FRANCES TROLLOPE

1, DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, YORK GATE, REGENT'S PARK, December 16, 1842.

MY DEAR MRS. TROLLOPE, — Let me thank you most cordially for your kind note, in reference to my "Notes," which has given me true pleasure and gratification.

As I never scrupled to say in America, so I can have no delicacy in saying to you, that, allowing for the change you worked in many social features of American society, and for the time that has passed since you wrote of the country, I am convinced that there is no writer who has so well and accurately (I need not add so entertainingly) described it, in many of its aspects, as you have done; and this renders your praise the more valuable to me. I do not recollect ever to have heard or seen the charge of exaggeration made against a feeble performance, though, in its feebleness, it may have been most untrue. It seems to me essentially natural, and quite inevitable, that common observers should accuse an uncommon one of this fault, and I have no doubt that you were long ago of this opinion; very much to your own comfort.

Mrs. Dickens begs me to thank you for your kind remembrance of her, and to convey to you her best regards. Always believe me, Faithfully yours.

LXVIII. GEORGE CATTERMOLE

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, December 20, 1842.

MY DEAR GEORGE, — It is impossible for me to tell you how greatly I am charmed with those beautiful pictures,[1] in which the whole feeling, and thought, and expression of the little story is rendered to the gratification of my inmost heart; and on which you have lavished those amazing resources of yours with a power at which I fairly wondered when I sat down yesterday before them.

I took them to Mac, straightway, in a cab, and it would have done you good if you could have seen and heard him. You can't think how moved he was by the old man in the church, or how pleased I was to have chosen it before he saw the drawings.

You are such a queer fellow and hold yourself so much aloof, that I am afraid to say half I would say touching my grateful admiration; so you shall imagine the rest. I inclose a note from Kate, to which I hope you will bring the only one acceptable reply. Always, my dear Cattermole,

Faithfully yours.

LXIX. C. C. FELTON

1, DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, YORK GATE, REGENT'S PARK, LONDON, 31st December, 1842.

MY DEAR FELTON, — Many and many happy New Years to you and yours! As many happy children as may be quite convenient (no more!), and as many happy meetings between them and our children, and between you and us, as the kind fates in their utmost kindness shall favourably decree!

The American book (to begin with that) has been a most complete and thoroughgoing success. Four large editions have now been sold *and paid for*, and it has won golden opinions from all sorts of men, except our friend in F——, who is a miserable creature; a disappointed man in great poverty, to

[1] Two water-colour drawings from Cattermole's designs for *Old Curiosity Shop*, ordered by Dickens.

whom I have ever been most kind and considerate (I need scarcely say that); and another friend in B——, no less a person than an illustrious gentleman named ——, who wrote a story called ——. They have done no harm, and have fallen short of their mark, which, of course, was to annoy me. Now I am perfectly free from any diseased curiosity in such respects, and whenever I hear of a notice of this kind, I never read it; whereby I always conceive (don't you?) that I get the victory. With regard to your slave-owners, they may cry, till they are as black in the face as their own slaves, that Dickens lies. Dickens does not write for their satisfaction, and Dickens will not explain for their comfort. Dickens has the name and date of every newspaper in which every one of those advertisements appeared, as they know perfectly well; but Dickens does not choose to give them, and will not at any time between this and the day of judgment. . . .

I have been hard at work on my new book, of which the first number has just appeared. The Paul Joneses who pursue happiness and profit at other men's cost will no doubt enable you to read it, almost as soon as you receive this. I hope you will like it. And I particularly commend, my dear Felton, one Mr. Pecksniff and his daughters to your tender regards. I have a kind of liking for them myself.

Blessed star of morning, such a trip as we had into Cornwall, just after Longfellow went away! The "we" means Forster, Maclise, Stanfield (the renowned marine painter), and the Inimitable Boz. We went down into Devonshire by the railroad, and there we hired an open carriage from an innkeeper, patriotic in all Pickwick matters, and went on with post-horses. Sometimes we travelled all night, sometimes all day, sometimes both. I kept the joint-stock purse, ordered all the dinners, paid all the turnpikes, conducted facetious conversations with the postboys, and regulated the pace at which we travelled. Stanfield (an old sailor) consulted an enormous map on all disputed points of wayfaring; and referred, moreover, to a pocket-compass and other scientific instruments. The luggage was in Forster's department; and Maclise, having nothing particular to do, sang songs. Heavens! If you could have seen the necks of bottles — distracting in their immense varieties of shape — peering out of the carriage pockets! If you could have witnessed the deep devotion of the postboys, the wild attachment of the hostlers,

the maniac glee of the waiters! If you could have followed us into the earthy old churches we visited, and into the strange caverns on the gloomy seashore, and down into the depths of mines, and up to the tops of giddy heights where the unspeakably green water was roaring, I don't know how many hundred feet below! If you could have seen but one gleam of the bright fires by which we sat in the big rooms of ancient inns at night, until long after the small hours had come and gone, or smelt but one steam of the hot punch (not white, dear Felton, like that amazing compound I sent you a taste of, but a rich, genial, glowing brown) which came in every evening in a huge broad china bowl! I never laughed in my life as I did on this journey. It would have done you good to hear me. I was choking and gasping and bursting the buckle off the back of my stock, all the way. And Stanfield (who is very much of your figure and temperament, but fifteen years older) got into such apoplectic entanglements that we were often obliged to beat him on the back with portmanteaus before we could recover him. Seriously, I do believe there never was such a trip. And they made such sketches, those two men, in the most romantic of our halting-places, that you would have sworn we had the Spirit of Beauty with us, as well as the Spirit of Fun. But stop till you come to England — I say no more.

The actuary of the national debt could n't calculate the number of children who are coming here on Twelfth Night, in honour of Charley's birthday, for which occasion I have provided a magic lantern and divers other tremendous engines of that nature. But the best of it is that Forster and I have purchased between us the entire stock in trade of a conjurer, the practice and display whereof is intrusted to me. And oh, my dear eyes, Felton, if you could see me conjuring the company's watches into impossible tea-caddies, and causing pieces of money to fly, and burning pocket-handkerchiefs without hurting 'em, and practising in my own room, without anybody to admire, you would never forget it as long as you live. In those tricks which require a confederate, I am assisted (by reason of his imperturbable good-humour) by Stanfield, who always does his part exactly the wrong way, to the unspeakable delight of all beholders. We come out on a small scale, to-night, at Forster's, where we see the old year out and the new one in. Particulars shall be forwarded in my next.

I have quite made up my mind that F—— really believes he *does* know you personally, and has all his life. He talks to me about you with such gravity that I am afraid to grin, and feel it necessary to look quite serious. Sometimes he *tells* me things about you, does n't ask me, you know, so that I am occasionally perplexed beyond all telling, and begin to think it was he, and not I, who went to America. It 's the queerest thing in the world.

The book I was to have given Longfellow for you is not worth sending by itself, being only a "Barnaby." But I will look up some manuscript for you (I think I have that of the "American Notes" complete), and will try to make the parcel better worth its long conveyance. With regard to Maclise's pictures, you certainly are quite right in your impression of them; but he is "such a discursive devil" (as he says about himself), and flies off at such odd tangents, that I feel it difficult to convey to you any general notion of his purpose. I will try to do so when I write again. I want very much to know about —— and that charming girl. . . . Give me full particulars. Will you remember me cordially to Sumner, and say I thank him for his welcome letter? The like to Hillard, with many regards to himself and his wife, with whom I had one night a little conversation which I shall not readily forget. The like to Washington Allston, and all friends who care for me and have outlived my book. . . . Always, my dear Felton,

With true regard and affection, yours.

LXX. MACVEY NAPIER

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, LONDON, January 21, 1843.

MY DEAR SIR, — Let me hasten to say, in the fullest and most explicit manner, that you have acted a most honourable, open, fair, and manly part in the matter of my complaint,[1] for which I beg you to accept my best thanks, and the assurance of my friendship and regard. I would on no account publish the letter you have sent me for that purpose, as I conceive that by doing so I should not reciprocate the spirit in which you have written to me privately. But if you should, upon consideration,

[1] His complaint was that the reviewer of his *American Notes*, in the number for January, 1843, had represented him as having gone to America as a missionary in the cause of international copyright.

think it not inexpedient to set the "Review" right in regard to this point of fact, by a note in the next number, I should be glad to see it there.

In reference to the article itself, it did, by repeating this statement, hurt my feelings excessively; and is, in this respect, I still conceive, most unworthy of its author. I am at a loss to divine who its author is. I *know* he read, in some cut-throat American paper, this and other monstrous statements, which I could at any time have converted into sickening praise by the payment of some fifty dollars. I know that he is perfectly aware that his statement in the "Review," in corroboration of these lies, would be disseminated through the whole of the United States; and that my contradiction will never be heard of. And though I care very little for the opinion of any person who will set the statement of an American editor (almost invariably an atrocious scoundrel) against my character and conduct, such as they may be, still, my sense of justice does revolt from this most cavalier and careless exhibition of me to a whole people, as a traveller under false pretences, and a disappointed intriguer. The better the acquaintance with America, the more defenceless and more inexcusable such conduct is. For I solemnly declare (and appeal to any man but the writer of this paper, who has travelled in that country, for confirmation of my statement) that the source from which he drew the "information," so recklessly put forth again in England, is infinitely more obscene, disgusting, and brutal than the very worst Sunday newspaper that has ever been printed in Great Britain. Conceive "The Edinburgh Review" quoting "The Satirist," or "The Man about Town," as an authority against a man with one grain of honour, or feather-weight of reputation.

With regard to yourself, let me say again that I thank you with all sincerity and heartiness, and fully acquit you of anything but kind and generous intentions towards me. In proof of which, I do assure you that I am even more desirous than before to write for the "Review," and to find some topic which would at once please me and you.

Always faithfully yours.

LXXI. C. C. FELTON

1, Devonshire Terrace, York Gate, Regent's Park,
London, March 2, 1843.

My dear Felton, — I don't know where to begin, but plunge headlong with a terrible splash into this letter, on the chance of turning up somewhere.

Hurrah! Up like a cork again, with "The North American Review" in my hand. Like you, my dear ——, and I can say no more in praise of it, though I go on to the end of the sheet. You cannot think how much notice it has attracted here. Brougham called the other day, with the number (thinking I might not have seen it), and I being out at the time, he left a note, speaking of it, and of the writer, in terms that warmed my heart. Lord Ashburton (one of whose people wrote a notice in the "Edinburgh" which they have since publicly contradicted) also wrote to me about it in just the same strain. And many others have done the like.

I am in great health and spirits and powdering away at "Chuzzlewit," with all manner of facetiousness rising up before me as I go on. As to news, I have really none, saving that —— (who never took any exercise in his life) has been laid up with rheumatism for weeks past, but is now, I hope, getting better. My little captain, as I call him — he who took me out, I mean, and with whom I had that adventure of the cork soles — has been in London too, and seeing all the lions under my escort. Good heavens! I wish you could have seen certain other mahogany-faced men (also captains) who used to call here for him in the morning, and bear him off to docks and rivers and all sorts of queer places, whence he always returned late at night, with rum-and-water tear-drops in his eyes, and a complication of punchy smells in his mouth! He was better than a comedy to us, having marvellous ways of tying his pocket-handkerchief round his neck at dinner-time in a kind of jolly embarrassment, and then forgetting what he had done with it; also of singing songs to wrong tunes, and calling land objects by sea names, and never knowing what o'clock it was, but taking midnight for seven in the evening; with many other sailor oddities, all full of honesty, manliness, and good-temper. We took him to Drury Lane Theatre to see "Much Ado About

obliged to go away. However, we went into a little parlour where the funeral party was, and God knows it was miserable enough, for the widow and children were crying bitterly in one corner, and the other mourners — mere people of ceremony, who cared no more for the dead man than the hearse did — were talking quite coolly and carelessly together in another; and the contrast was as painful and distressing as anything I ever saw. There was an Independent clergyman present, with his bands on and a Bible under his arm, who, as soon as we were seated, addressed —— thus, in a loud, emphatic voice: "Mr. Cruikshank, have you seen a paragraph respecting our departed friend, which has gone the round of the morning papers?" "Yes, sir," says Cruikshank, "I have," looking very hard at me the while, for he had told me with some pride coming down that it was his composition. "Oh!" said the clergyman. "Then you will agree with me, Mr. Cruikshank, that it is not only an insult to me, who am the servant of the Almighty, but an insult to the Almighty, whose servant I am." "How is that, sir?" said Cruikshank. "It is stated, Mr. Cruikshank, in that paragraph," says the minister, "that when Mr. Hone failed in business as a book-seller, he was persuaded by *me* to try the pulpit; which is false, incorrect, unchristian, in a manner blasphemous, and in all respects contemptible. Let us pray." With which, my dear Felton, and in the same breath, I give you my word, he knelt down, as we all did, and began a very miserable jumble of an extemporary prayer. I was really penetrated with sorrow for the family, but when Cruikshank (upon his knees, and sobbing for the loss of an old friend) whispered me that "if that was n't a clergyman, and it was n't a funeral, he 'd have punched his head," I felt as if nothing but convulsions could possibly relieve me. . . .

Faithfully always, my dear Felton.

LXXII. DOUGLAS JERROLD

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, May 3, 1843.

MY DEAR JERROLD, — Let me thank you most cordially for your books, not only for their own sakes (and I have read them with perfect delight), but also for this hearty and most welcome mark of your recollection of the friendship we have established; in which light I know I may regard and prize them.

I am greatly pleased with your opening paper in the Illuminated. It is very wise, and capital; written with the finest end of that iron pen of yours; witty, much needed, and full of truth. I vow to God that I think the parrots of society are more intolerable and mischievous than its birds of prey. If ever I destroy myself, it will be in the bitterness of hearing those infernal and damnably good old times extolled. Once, in a fit of madness, after having been to a public dinner which took place just as this Ministry came in, I wrote the parody I send you inclosed, for Fonblanque. There is nothing in it but wrath; but that's wholesome, so I send it you.

I am writing a little history of England for my boy, which I will send you when it is printed for him, though your boys are too old to profit by it. It is curious that I have tried to impress upon him (writing, I dare say, at the same moment with you) the exact spirit of your paper, for I don't know what I should do if he were to get hold of any Conservative or High Church notions; and the best way of guarding against any such horrible result is, I take it, to wring the parrots' necks in his very cradle.

Oh, Heaven, if you could have been with me at a hospital dinner last Monday! There were men there who made such speeches and expressed such sentiments as any moderately intelligent dustman would have blushed through his cindery bloom to have thought of. Sleek, slobbering, bow-paunched, overfed, apoplectic, snorting cattle, and the auditory leaping up in their delight! I never saw such an illustration of the power of purse, or felt so degraded and debased by its contemplation, since I have had eyes and ears. The absurdity of the thing was too horrible to laugh at. It was perfectly overwhelming. But if I could have partaken it with anybody who would have felt it as you would have done, it would have had quite another aspect; or would at least, like a "classic mask" (oh d— that word!), have had one funny side to relieve its dismal features.

Supposing fifty families were to emigrate into the wilds of North America, — yours, mine, and forty-eight others, — picked for their concurrence of opinion on all important subjects and for their resolution to found a colony of common sense, how soon would that devil, Cant, present itself among them in one shape or other? The day they landed, do you say, or the day after?

That is a great mistake (almost the only one I know) in the "Arabian Nights," when the princess restores people to their original beauty by sprinkling them with the golden water. It is quite clear that she must have made monsters of them by such a christening as that.

My dear Jerrold,

Faithfully your friend.

LXXIII. DAVID DICKSON

1, Devonshire Terrace, York Gate, Regent's Park,
May 10, 1843.

Sir, — Permit me to say, in reply to your letter, that you do not understand the intention (I dare say the fault is mine) of that passage in the "Pickwick Papers" which has given you offence.[1] The design of "the Shepherd," and of this and every other allusion to him, is to show how sacred things are degraded, vulgarised, and rendered absurd when persons who are utterly incompetent to teach the commonest things take upon themselves to expound such mysteries, and how, in making mere cant phrases of divine words, these persons miss the spirit in which they had their origin. I have seen a great deal of this sort of thing in many parts of England, and I never knew it lead to charity or good deeds.

Whether the great Creator of the world and the creature of his hands, moulded in his own image, be quite so opposite in character as you believe, is a question which it would profit us little to discuss. I like the frankness and candour of your letter, and thank you for it. That every man who seeks heaven must be born again, in good thoughts of his Maker, I sincerely believe. That it is expedient for every hound to say so in a certain snuffling form of words, to which he attaches no good meaning, I do not believe. I take it there is no difference between us.

Faithfully yours.

[1] Mr. Dickson had pointed out what he regarded as a reflection on the scriptural doctrine of the new birth.

LXXIV. DOUGLAS JERROLD

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, June 13, 1843.

MY DEAR JERROLD, — Yes, you have anticipated my occupation. "Chuzzlewit" be d—d. High comedy and five hundred pounds are the only matters I can think of. I call it "The One Thing Needful; or, A Part is Better than the Whole." Here are the characters: —

Old Febrile	Mr. FARREN.
Young Febrile (his Son)	Mr. HOWE.
Jack Hessians (his Friend)	Mr. W. LACY.
Chalks (a Landlord)	Mr. GOUGH.
Hon. Harry Staggers	Mr. MELLON.
Sir Thomas Tip	Mr. BUCKSTONE.
Swig	Mr. WEBSTER.
The Duke of Leeds	Mr. COUTTS.
Sir Smivin Growler	Mr. MACREADY.
Servants, Gamblers, Visitors, etc.	
Mrs. Febrile	Mrs. GALLOT.
Lady Tip	Mrs. HUMBY.
Mrs. Sour	Mrs. W. CLIFFORD.
Fanny	Miss A. SMITH.[1]

One scene, where Old Febrile tickles Lady Tip in the ribs, and afterwards dances out with his hat behind him, his stick before, and his eye on the pit, I expect will bring the house down. There is also another point, where Old Febrile, at the conclusion of his disclosure to Swig, rises and says: "And now, Swig, tell me, have I acted well?" And Swig says: "Well, Mr. Febrile, have you ever acted ill?" which will carry off the piece.

Herne Bay. Hum. I suppose it 's no worse than any other place in this weather, but it is watery rather — is n't it? In my mind's eye, I have the sea in a perpetual state of smallpox; and the chalk running down hill like town milk. But I know the comfort of getting to work in a fresh place, and proposing pious projects to one's self, and having the more substantial advantage of going to bed early and getting up ditto, and walking about alone. I should like to deprive you of the last-named happiness, and to take a good long stroll, terminating in a public-house, and whatever they chanced to have in it. But

[1] The imaginary cast of an imaginary play.

fine days are over, I think. The horrible misery of London in this weather, with not even a fire to make it cheerful, is hideous.

But I have my comedy to fly to. My only comfort! I walk up and down the street at the back of the theatre every night, and peep in at the greenroom window, thinking of the time when "Dick—ins" will be called for by excited hundreds, and won't come till Mr. Webster (half Swig and half himself) shall enter from his dressing-room, and, quelling the tempest with a smile, beseech that wizard, if he be in the house (here he looks up at my box), to accept the congratulations of the audience, and indulge them with a sight of the man who has got five hundred pounds in money, and it's impossible to say how much in laurel. Then I shall come forward, and bow once — twice — thrice — roars of approbation — Brayvo — brarvo — hooray — hoorar — hooroar — one cheer more; and asking Webster home to supper, shall declare eternal friendship for that public-spirited individual.

They have not sent me the "Illustrated Magazine." What do they mean by that? You don't say your daughter is better, so I hope you mean that she is quite well. My wife desires her best regards.

I am always, my dear Jerrold,

Faithfully your friend,

THE CONGREVE OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

(which I mean to be called in the Sunday papers).

P. S. — I shall dedicate it to Webster, beginning: "My dear Sir, — When you first proposed to stimulate the slumbering dramatic talent of England, I assure you I had not the least idea" — etc., etc., etc.

LXXV. C. C. FELTON

BROADSTAIRS, KENT, September 1, 1843.

MY DEAR FELTON, — If I thought it in the nature of things that you and I could ever agree on paper, touching a certain Chuzzlewitian question whereupon F—— tells me you have remarks to make, I should immediately walk into the same, tooth and nail. But as I don't, I won't. Contenting myself with this prediction, that one of these years and days, you will

write or say to me: "My dear Dickens, you were right, though rough, and did a world of good, though you got most thoroughly hated for it." To which I shall reply: "My dear Felton, I looked a long way off and not immediately under my nose." . . . At which sentiment you will laugh, and I shall laugh; and then (for I foresee this will all happen in my land) we shall call for another pot of porter and two or three dozen of oysters.

Now, don't you in your own heart and soul quarrel with me for this long silence? Not half so much as I quarrel with myself, I know; but if you could read half the letters I write to you in imagination, you would swear by me for the best of correspondents. The truth is, that when I have done my morning's work, down goes my pen, and from that minute I feel it a positive impossibility to take it up again, until imaginary butchers and bakers wave me to my desk. I walk about brimful of letters, facetious descriptions, touching morsels, and pathetic friendships, but can't for the soul of me uncork myself. The post-office is my rock ahead. My average number of letters that *must* be written every day is, at the least, a dozen. And you could no more know what I was writing to you spiritually, from the perusal of the bodily thirteenth, than you could tell from my hat what was going on in my head, or could read my heart on the surface of my flannel waistcoat.

This is a little fishing-place; intensely quiet; built on a cliff, whereon — in the centre of a tiny semi-circular bay — our house stands; the sea rolling and dashing under the windows. Seven miles out are the Goodwin Sands (you've heard of the Goodwin Sands?), whence floating lights perpetually wink after dark, as if they were carrying on intrigues with the servants. Also there is a big lighthouse called the North Foreland on a hill behind the village, a severe parsonic light, which reproves the young and giddy floaters, and stares grimly out upon the sea. Under the cliff are rare good sands, where all the children assemble every morning and throw up impossible fortifications, which the sea throws down again at high water. Old gentlemen and ancient ladies flirt after their own manner in two reading-rooms and on a great many scattered seats in the open air. Other old gentlemen look all day through telescopes and never see anything. In a bay-window in a one-pair sits, from nine o'clock to one, a gentleman with rather long hair and no neckcloth, who writes and grins as if he thought he were very funny indeed.

His name is Boz. At one he disappears, and presently emerges from a bathing-machine, and may be seen — a kind of salmon-coloured porpoise — splashing about in the ocean. After that he may be seen in another bay-window on the ground floor, eating a strong lunch; after that, walking a dozen miles or so, or lying on his back in the sand reading a book. Nobody bothers him unless they know he is disposed to be talked to; and I am told he is very comfortable indeed. He 's as brown as a berry, and they *do* say is a small fortune to the innkeeper who sells beer and cold punch. But this is mere rumour. Sometimes he goes up to London (eighty miles, or so, away), and then I 'm told there is a sound in Lincoln's Inn Fields at night, as of men laughing, together with a clinking of knives and forks and wine-glasses.

I never shall have been so near you since we parted aboard the George Washington as next Tuesday. Forster, Maclise, and I, and perhaps Stanfield, are then going aboard the Cunard steamer at Liverpool, to bid Macready good-bye, and bring his wife away. It will be a very hard parting. You will see and know him, of course. We gave him a splendid dinner last Saturday at Richmond, whereat I presided with my accustomed grace. He is one of the noblest fellows in the world, and I would give a great deal that you and I should sit beside each other to see him play Virginius, Lear, or Werner, which I take to be, every way, the greatest piece of exquisite perfection that his lofty art is capable of attaining. His Macbeth, especially the last act, is a tremendous reality; but so indeed is almost everything he does. You recollect, perhaps, that he was the guardian of our children while we were away. I love him dearly. . . .

You asked me, long ago, about Maclise. He is such a wayward fellow in his subjects, that it would be next to impossible to write such an article as you were thinking of about him. I wish you could form an idea of his genius. One of these days a book will come out, "Moore's Irish Melodies," entirely illustrated by him, on every page. *When* it comes, I 'll send it to you. You will have some notion of him then. He is in great favour with the Queen, and paints secret pictures for her to put upon her husband's table on the morning of his birthday, and the like. But if he has a care, he will leave his mark on more enduring things than palace walls.

And so L—— is married. I remember *her* well, and could draw her portrait, in words, to the life. A very beautiful and gentle creature, and a proper love for a poet. My cordial remembrances and congratulations. Do they live in the house where we breakfasted? . . .

I very often dream I am in America again; but, strange to say, I never dream of you. I am always endeavouring to get home in disguise, and have a dreary sense of the distance. Apropos of dreams, is it not a strange thing if writers of fiction never dream of their own creations; recollecting, I suppose, even in their dreams, that they have no real existence? *I* never dreamed of any of my own characters, and I feel it so impossible that I would wager Scott never did of his, real as they are. I had a good piece of absurdity in my head a night or two ago. I dreamed that somebody was dead. I don't know who, but it's not to the purpose. It was a private gentleman, and a particular friend; and I was greatly overcome when the news was broken to me (very delicately) by a gentleman in a cocked hat, top boots, and a sheet. Nothing else. "Good God!" I said, "is he dead?" "He is as dead, sir," rejoined the gentleman, "as a door-nail. But we must all die, Mr. Dickens, sooner or later, my dear sir." "Ah!" I said. "Yes, to be sure. Very true. But what did he die of?" The gentleman burst into a flood of tears, and said, in a voice broken by emotion: "He christened his youngest child, sir, with a toasting-fork." I never in my life was so affected as at his having fallen a victim to this complaint. It carried a conviction to my mind that he never could have recovered. I knew that it was the most interesting and fatal malady in the world; and I wrung the gentleman's hand in a convulsion of respectful admiration, for I felt that this explanation did equal honour to his head and heart!

What do you think of Mrs. Gamp? And how do you like the undertaker? I have a fancy that they are in your way. Oh heaven! such green woods as I was rambling among down in Yorkshire, when I was getting that done last July! For days and weeks we never saw the sky but through green boughs; and all day long I cantered over such soft moss and turf that the horse's feet scarcely made a sound upon it. We have some friends in that part of the country (close to Castle Howard, where Lord Morpeth's father dwells in state, *in* his park indeed),

who are the jolliest of the jolly, keeping a big old country house, with an ale cellar, something larger than a reasonable church, and everything, like Goldsmith's bear dancers, "in a concatenation accordingly." Just the place for you, Felton! We performed some madnesses there in the way of forfeits, picnics, rustic games, inspections of ancient monasteries at midnight, when the moon was shining, that would have gone to your heart, and, as Mr. Weller says, "come out on the other side." . . .

Write soon, my dear Felton; and if I write to you less often than I would, believe that my affectionate heart is with you always. Loves and regards to all friends, from yours ever and ever. Very faithfully yours.

LXXVI. MACVEY NAPIER

Broadstairs, September 16, 1843.

My dear Sir, — I hinted, in a letter of introduction I gave Mr. Hood to you, that I had been thinking of a subject for the "Edinburgh." Would it meet the purposes of the "Review" to come out strongly against any system of education based exclusively on the principles of the Established Church? If it would, I should like to show why such a thing as the Church Catechism is wholly inapplicable to the state of ignorance that now prevails; and why no system but one, so general in great religious principles as to include all creeds, can meet the wants and understandings of the dangerous classes of society. This is the only broad ground I could hold, consistently with what I feel and think on such a subject. But I could give, in taking it, a description of certain voluntary places of instruction, called "the ragged schools," now existing in London, and of the schools in jails, and of the ignorance presented in such places, which would make a very striking paper, especially if they were put in strong comparison with the effort making, by subscription, to maintain exclusive Church instruction. I could show these people in a state so miserable and so neglected that their very nature rebels against the simplest religion, and that to convey to them the faintest outlines of any system of distinction between right and wrong is in itself a giant's task, before which mysteries and squabbles for forms *must* give way. Would this be too much for the "Review"? Faithfully yours.

LXXVII. R. H. HORNE

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, November 13, 1843.

Pray tell that besotted —— to let the opera [1] sink into its native obscurity. I did it in a fit of d——ble good-nature long ago, for Hullah, who wrote some very pretty music to it. I just put down for everybody what everybody at the St. James's Theatre wanted to say and do, and that they could say and do best, and I have been most sincerely repentant ever since. The farce [2] I also did as a sort of practical joke, for Harley, whom I have known a long time. It was funny — adapted from one of the published sketches called the "Great Winglebury Duel," and was published by Chapman and Hall. But I have no copy of it now, nor should I think they have. But both these things were done without the least consideration or regard to reputation.

I would n't repeat them for a thousand pounds apiece, and devoutly wish them to be forgotten. If you will impress this on the waxy mind of —— I shall be truly and unaffectedly obliged to you.

Always faithfully yours.

LXXVIII. JOHN FORSTER

November 25, 1843.

Browning's play [3] has thrown me into a perfect passion of sorrow. To say that there is anything in its subject save what is lovely, true, deeply affecting, full of the best emotion, the most earnest feeling, and the most true and tender source of interest, is to say that there is no light in the sun, and no heat in blood. It is full of genius, natural and great thoughts, profound and yet simple and beautiful in its vigour. I know nothing that is so affecting, nothing in any book I have ever read, as Mildred's recurrence to that "I was so young — I had no mother." I know no love like it, no passion like it, no moulding of a splendid thing after its conception, like it. And I swear it is a tragedy that MUST be played; and must be played, moreover, by Macready. There are some things I would have

[1] *The Village Coquettes.* [2] *The Strange Gentleman.*
[3] *A Blot in the 'Scutcheon.*

changed if I could (they are very slight, mostly broken lines); and I assuredly would have the old servant *begin his tale upon the scene;* and be taken by the throat, or drawn upon, by his master, in its commencement. But the tragedy I never shall forget, or less vividly remember than I do now. And if you tell Browning that I have seen it, tell him that I believe from my soul there is no man living (and not many dead) who could produce such a work. — Macready likes the altered prologue very much. . . .

LXXIX. C. C. FELTON

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, LONDON, January 2, 1844.

MY VERY DEAR FELTON, — You are a prophet, and had best retire from business straightway. Yesterday morning, New Year's Day, when I walked into my little workroom after breakfast, and was looking out of window at the snow in the garden — not seeing it particularly well in consequence of some staggering suggestions of last night, whereby I was beset — the postman came to the door with a knock, for which I denounced him from my heart. Seeing your hand upon the cover of a letter which he brought, I immediately blessed him, presented him with a glass of whiskey, inquired after his family (they are all well), and opened the despatch with a moist and oystery twinkle in my eye. And on the very day from which the new year dates, I read your New Year congratulations as punctually as if you lived in the next house. Why don't you?

Now, if instantly on the receipt of this you will send a free and independent citizen down to the Cunard wharf at Boston, you will find that Captain Hewett, of the Britannia steamship (my ship), has a small parcel for Professor Felton of Cambridge; and in that parcel you will find a Christmas Carol in prose; being a short story of Christmas by Charles Dickens. Over which Christmas Carol Charles Dickens wept and laughed and wept again, and excited himself in a most extraordinary manner in the composition; and thinking whereof he walked about the black streets of London, fifteen and twenty miles many a night when all the sober folks had gone to bed. . . . Its success is most prodigious. And by every post all manner of strangers write all manner of letters to him about their homes and hearths,

and how this same Carol is read aloud there, and kept on a little shelf by itself. Indeed, it is the greatest success, as I am told, that this ruffian and rascal has ever achieved.

Forster is out again; and if he don't go in again, after the manner in which we have been keeping Christmas, he must be very strong indeed. Such dinings, such dancings, such conjurings, such blindman's-buffings, such theatre-goings, such kissings-out of old years and kissings-in of new ones, never took place in these parts before. To keep the "Chuzzlewit" going, and do this little book, the "Carol," in the odd times between two parts of it, was, as you may suppose, pretty tight work. But when it was done I broke out like a madman. And if you could have seen me at a children's party at Macready's the other night, going down a country dance with Mrs. M., you would have thought I was a country gentleman of independent property, residing on a tip-top farm, with the wind blowing straight in my face every day. . . .

Your friend, Mr. P——, dined with us one day (I don't know whether I told you this before), and pleased us very much. Mr. C—— has dined here once, and spent an evening here. I have not seen him lately, though he has called twice or thrice; for K—— being unwell and I busy, we have not been visible at our accustomed seasons. I wonder whether H—— has fallen in your way. Poor H——! He was a good fellow, and has the most grateful heart I ever met with. Our journeyings seem to be a dream now. Talking of dreams, strange thoughts of Italy and France, and maybe Germany, are springing up within me as the "Chuzzlewit" clears off. It 's a secret I have hardly breathed to any one, but I "think" of leaving England for a year, next midsummer, bag and baggage, little ones and all — then coming out with *such* a story, Felton, all at once, no parts, sledge-hammer blow.

I send you a Manchester paper, as you desire. The report is not exactly done, but very well done, notwithstanding. It was a very splendid sight, I assure you, and an awful-looking audience. I am going to preside at a similar meeting at Liverpool on the 26th of next month, and on my way home I may be obliged to preside at another at Birmingham. I will send you papers, if the reports be at all like the real thing.

I wrote to Prescott about his book, with which I was perfectly charmed. I think his descriptions masterly, his style

brilliant, his purpose manly and gallant always. The introductory account of Aztec civilisation impressed me exactly as it impressed you. From beginning to end the whole history is enchanting and full of genius. I only wonder that, having such an opportunity of illustrating the doctrine of visible judgments, he never remarks, when Cortes and his men tumble the idols down the temple steps and call upon the people to take notice that their gods are powerless to help themselves, that possibly if some intelligent native had tumbled down the image of the Virgin or patron saint after them nothing very remarkable might have ensued in consequence.

Of course you like Macready. Your name 's Felton. I wish you could see him play Lear. It is stupendously terrible. But I suppose he would be slow to act it with the Boston company.

Hearty remembrances to Sumner, Longfellow, Prescott, and all whom you know I love to remember. Countless happy years to you and yours, my dear Felton, and some instalment of them, however slight, in England, in the loving company of

THE PROSCRIBED ONE.

Oh, breathe not his name!

LXXX. W. C. MACREADY

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, January 3, 1844.

MY VERY DEAR MACREADY, — You know all the news, and you know I love you; so I no more know why I write than I do why I "come round" after the play to shake hands with you in your dressing-room. I say come, as if you were at this present moment the lessee of Drury Lane, and had —— with a long face on one hand, —— elaborately explaining that everything in creation is a joint-stock company on the other, the inimitable B. by the fire, in conversation with ——. Well-a-day! I see it all, and smell that extraordinary compound of odd scents peculiar to a theatre, which bursts upon me when I swing open the little door in the hall, accompanies me as I meet perspiring supers in the narrow passage, goes with me up the two steps, crosses the stage, winds round the third entrance P. S. as I wind, and escorts me safely into your presence, where I find you unwinding something slowly round and round your chest, which is so long that no man can see the end of it.

Oh, that you had been at Clarence Terrace on Nina's birthday! Good God, how we missed you, talked of you, drank your health, and wondered what you were doing! Perhaps you are Falkland enough (I swear I suspect you of it) to feel rather sore — just a little bit, you know, the merest trifle in the world — on hearing that Mrs. Macready looked brilliant, blooming, young, and handsome, and that she danced a country dance with the writer hereof (Acres to your Falkland) in a thorough spirit of becoming good-humour and enjoyment. Now you don't like to be told that? Nor do you quite like to hear that Forster and I conjured bravely; that a plum pudding was produced from an empty saucepan, held over a blazing fire kindled in Stanfield's hat without damage to the lining; that a box of bran was changed into a live guinea-pig, which ran between my godchild's feet, and was the cause of such a shrill uproar and clapping of hands that you might have heard it (and I dare say did) in America; that three half-crowns being taken from Major Burns and put into a tumbler-glass before his eyes, did then and there give jingling answers to the questions asked of them by me, and knew where you were and what you were doing, to the unspeakable admiration of the whole assembly. Neither do you quite like to be told that we are going to do it again next Saturday, with the addition of demoniacal dresses from the masquerade shop; nor that Mrs. Macready, for her gallant bearing always, and her best sort of best affection, is the best creature I know. Never mind; no man shall gag me, and those are my opinions.

My dear Macready, the lecturing proposition is not to be thought of. I have not the slightest doubt or hesitation in giving you my most strenuous and decided advice against it. Looking only to its effect at home, I am immovable in my conviction that the impression it would produce would be one of failure, and a reduction of yourself to the level of those who do the like here. To us who know the Boston names and honour them, and who know Boston and like it (Boston is what I would have the whole United States to be), the Boston requisition would be a valuable document, of which you and your friends might be proud. But those names are perfectly unknown to the public here, and would produce not the least effect. The only thing known to the public here is, that they ask (when I say "they" I mean the people) everybody to

lecture. It is one of the things I have ridiculed in "Chuzzlewit." Lecture you, and you fall into the roll of Lardners, Vandenhoffs, Eltons, Knowleses, Buckinghams. You are off your pedestal, have flung away your glass slipper, and changed your triumphal coach into a seedy old pumpkin. I am quite sure of it, and cannot express my strong conviction in language of sufficent force.

"Puff-ridden!" why to be sure they are. The nation is a miserable Sindbad, and its boasted press the loathsome, foul old man upon his back, and yet they will tell you, and proclaim to the four winds for repetition here, that they don't need their ignorant and brutal papers, as if the papers could exist if they did n't need them! Let any two of these vagabonds, in any town you go to, take it into their heads to make you an object of attack, or to direct the general attention elsewhere, and what avail those wonderful images of passion which you have been all your life perfecting!

I have sent you, to the charge of our trusty and well-beloved Colden, a little book [1] I published on the 17th of December, and which has been a most prodigious success — the greatest, I think, I have ever achieved. It pleases me to think that it will bring you home for an hour or two, and I long to hear you have read it on some quiet morning. Do they allow you to be quiet, by the way? "Some of our most fashionable people, sir," denounced me awfully for liking to be alone sometimes.

Now that we have turned Christmas, I feel as if your face were directed homewards, Macready. The downhill part of the road is before us now, and we shall travel on to midsummer at a dashing pace; and please Heaven, I will be at Liverpool when you come steaming up the Mersey, with that red funnel smoking out unutterable things, and your heart much fuller than your trunks, though something lighter! If I be not the first Englishman to shake hands with you on English ground, the man who gets before me will be a brisk and active fellow, and even then need put his best leg foremost. So I warn Forster to keep in the rear, or he 'll be blown.

If you shall have any leisure to project and put on paper the outline of a scheme for opening any theatre on your return, upon a certain list subscribed, and on certain understandings with the actors, it strikes me that it would be wise to break

[1] *A Christmas Carol.*

ground while you are still away. Of course I need not say that I will see anybody or do anything — even to the calling together of the actors — if you should ever deem it desirable. My opinion is that our respected and valued friend Mr. —— will stagger through another season, if he don't rot first. I understand he is in a partial state of decomposition at this minute. He was very ill, but got better. How is it that —— always do get better, and strong hearts are so easy to die?

Kate sends her tender love; so does Georgy, so does Charley, so does Mamey, so does Katey, so does Walter, so does the other one who is to be born next week. Look homeward always, as we look abroad to you. God bless you, my dear Macready. Ever your affectionate friend.

LXXXI. MRS. CHARLES DICKENS

LIVERPOOL, RADLEY'S HOTEL, Monday, February 26, 1844.

MY DEAR KATE, — I got down here last night (after a most intolerably wet journey) before seven, and found Thompson sitting by my fire. He had ordered dinner, and we ate it pleasantly enough, and went to bed in good time. This morning, Mr. Yates, the great man connected with the Institution (and a brother of Ashton Yates's), called. I went to look at it with him. It is an enormous place, and the tickets have been selling at two and even three guineas apiece. The lecture-room, in which the celebration is held, will accommodate over thirteen hundred people. It was being fitted with gas after the manner of the ring at Astley's. I should think it an easy place to speak in, being a semi-circle with seats rising one above another to the ceiling, and will have eight hundred ladies to-night, in full dress. I am rayther shaky just now, but shall pull up, I have no doubt. At dinner-time to-morrow you will receive, I hope, a facetious document hastily penned after I return to-night, telling you how it all went off.

When I came back here, I found Fanny [1] and Hewett [2] had picked me up just before. We all went off straight to the Britannia, which lay where she did when we went on board. We went into the old little cabin and the ladies' cabin, but Mrs.

[1] His sister, Mrs. Burnett.

[2] The captain of the Britannia, the steamer in which Mr. and Mrs. Dickens went to America.

Bean had gone to Scotland, as the ship does not sail again before May. In the saloon we had some champagne and biscuits, and Hewett had set out upon the table a block of Boston ice weighing fifty pounds. Scott, of the Caledonia, lunched with us — a very nice fellow. He saw Macready play Macbeth in Boston, and gave me a tremendous account of the effect. Poor Burroughs, of the George Washington, died on board, on his last passage home. His little wife was with him.

Hewett dines with us to-day, and I have procured him admission to-night. I am very sorry indeed (and so was he), that you did n't see the old ship. It was the strangest thing in the world to go on board again.

I had Bacon with me as far as Watford yesterday, and very pleasant. Sheil was also in the train, on his way to Ireland.

Give my best love to Georgy, and kisses to the darlings. Also affectionate regards to Mac and Forster.

Ever affectionately.

LXXXII. COUNTESS OF BLESSINGTON

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, March 10, 1844.

MY DEAR LADY BLESSINGTON, — I have made up my mind to "see the world," and mean to decamp, bag and baggage, next midsummer for a twelvemonth. I purpose establishing my family in some convenient place, from whence I can make personal ravages on the neighbouring country, and somehow or other have got it into my head that Nice would be a favourable spot for headquarters. You are so well acquainted with these matters that I am anxious to have the benefit of your kind advice. I do not doubt that you can tell me whether this same Nice be a healthy place the year through, whether it be reasonably cheap, pleasant to look at and to live in, and the like. If you will tell me, when you have ten minutes to spare for such a client, I shall be delighted to come to you, and guide myself by your opinion. I will not ask you to forgive me for troubling you, because I am sure beforehand that you will do so. I beg to be kindly remembered to Count D'Orsay and to your nieces — I was going to say "the Misses Power," but it looks so like the blue board at a ladies' school, that I stopped short.

Very faithfully yours.

LXXXIII. T. J. THOMPSON

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, March 13, 1844.

MY DEAR THOMPSON, — Think of Italy! Don't give that up! Why, my house is entered at Phillips's and at Gillow's to be let for twelve months; my letter of credit lies ready at Coutts's; my last number of "Chuzzlewit" comes out in June; and the first week, if not the first day in July, sees me, God willing, steaming off towards the sun.

Yes. We must have a few books, and everything that is idle, sauntering, and enjoyable. We must lie down at the bottom of these boats, and devise all kinds of engines for improving on that gallant holiday. I see myself in a striped shirt, moustache, blouse, red sash, straw hat, and white trousers, sitting astride a mule, and not caring for the clock, the day of the month, or the week. Tinkling bells upon the mule, I hope. I look forward to it day and night, and wish the time were come. Don't *you* give it up. That 's all. . . .

Always, my dear Thompson,

Faithfully your friend.

LXXXIV. THE SAME

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, Sunday, March 24, 1844.

MY DEAR THOMPSON, — My study fireplace having been suddenly seized with symptoms of insanity, I have been in great affliction. The bricklayer was called in, and considered it necessary to perform an extensive operation without delay. I don't know whether you are aware of a peculiar bricky raggedness (not unaccompanied by pendant stalactites of mortar) which is exposed to view on the removal of a stove, or are acquainted with the suffocating properties of a kind of accidental snuff which flies out of the same cavernous region in great abundance. It is very distressing. I have been walking about the house after the manner of the dove before the water subsided for some days, and have no pens or ink or paper. Hence this gap in our correspondence which I now repair.

What are you doing? ? ? When are you coming away? ? ? ? Why are you stopping there? ? ? ? ? Do enlighten me, for I think of you constantly, and have a true and real interest in your proceedings.

D'Orsay, who knows Italy very well indeed, strenuously insists there is no such place for headquarters as Pisa. Lady Blessington says so also. What do you say? On the first of July! The first of July! Dick turns his head towards the orange groves. . . .

Affectionately yours.

LXXXV. EDWIN LANDSEER

ATHENÆUM, Monday Morning, May 27, 1844.

MY DEAR LANDSEER, — I have let my house with such delicious promptitude, or, as the Americans would say, "with sich everlass'in slickness and al-mity sprydom," that we turn out to-night! in favour of a widow lady, who keeps it all the time we are away!

Wherefore if you, looking up into the sky this evening between five and six (as possibly you may be, in search of the spring), should see a speck in the air — a mere dot — which, growing larger and larger by degrees, appears in course of time to be an eagle (chain and all) in a light cart, accompanied by a raven of uncommon sagacity, curse that good-nature which prompted you to say it — that you would give them house-room. And do it for the love of

Boz.

P. S. — The writer hereof may be heerd on by personal enquiry at No. 9, Osnaburgh Terrace, New Road.

LXXXVI. DANIEL MACLISE

VILLA DI BAGNARELLO, ALBANO, Monday, July 22, 1844.

MY VERY DEAR MAC, — I address you with something of the lofty spirit of an exile — a banished commoner — a sort of Anglo-Pole. I don't exactly know what I have done for my country in coming away from it; but I feel it is something — something great — something virtuous and heroic. Lofty emotions rise within me, when I see the sun set on the blue Mediterranean. I am the limpet on the rock. My father's name is Turner, and my boots are green.

Apropos of blue. In a certain picture, called "The Serenade," you painted a sky. If you ever have occasion to paint

the Mediterranean, let it be exactly of that colour. It lies before me now, as deeply and intensely blue. But no such colour is above me. Nothing like it. In the South of France — at Avignon, at Aix, at Marseilles — I saw deep blue skies (not *so* deep though — O Lord, no !), and also in America; but the sky above me is familiar to my sight. Is it heresy to say that I have seen its twin brother shining through the window of Jack Straw's — that down in Devonshire I have seen a better sky ? I dare say it is; but like a great many other heresies, it is true.

But such green — green — green — as flutters in the vineyard down below the windows, *that* I never saw; nor yet such lilac, and such purple as float between me and the distant hills; nor yet — in anything — picture, book, or verbal boredom — such awful, solemn, impenetrable blue, as is that same sea. It has such an absorbing, silent, deep, profound effect, that I can't help thinking it suggested the idea of Styx. It looks as if a draught of it — only so much as you could scoop up on the beach, in the hollow of your hand — would wash out everything else, and make a great blue blank of your intellect.

When the sun sets clearly, then, by Heaven, it is majestic! From any one of eleven windows here, or from a terrace overgrown with grapes, you may behold the broad sea; villas, houses, mountains, forts, strewn with rose-leaves — strewn with thorns — stifled in thorns ! Dyed through and through and through. For a moment. No more. The sun is impatient and fierce, like everything else in these parts, and goes down headlong. Run to fetch your hat — and it 's night. Wink at the right time of black night — and it 's morning. Everything is in extremes. There is an insect here (I forget its name, and Fletcher and Roche [1] are both out) that chirps all day. There is one outside the window now. The chirp is very loud, something like a Brobdingnagian grasshopper. The creature is born to chirp — to progress in chirping — to chirp louder, louder, louder — till it gives one tremendous chirp, and bursts itself. That is its life and death. Everything "is in a concatenation accordingly." The day gets brighter, brighter, brighter, till it 's night. The summer gets hotter, hotter, hotter, till it bursts. The fruit gets riper, riper, riper, till it tumbles down and rots.

[1] A French courier who accompanied Dickens in all his foreign travel. He died in 1849.

Ask me a question or two about fresco — will you be so good? All the houses are painted in fresco hereabout, — the outside walls, I mean; the fronts, and backs, and sides, — and all the colour has run into damp and green seediness, and the very design has struggled away into the component atoms of the plaster. Sometimes (but not often) I can make out a Virgin with a mildewed glory round her head; holding nothing, in an indiscernible lap, with invisible arms; and occasionally the leg or arms of a cherub, but it is very melancholy and dim. There are two old fresco-painted vases outside my own gate — one on either hand — which are so faint that I never saw them till last night; and only then because I was looking over the wall after a lizard, who had come upon me while I was smoking a cigar above, and crawled over one of these embellishments to his retreat. There is a church here — the Church of the Annunciation — which they are now (by "they" I mean certain noble families) restoring at a vast expense, as a work of piety. It is a large church — with a great many little chapels in it, and a very high dome. Every inch of this edifice is painted, and every design is set in a great gold frame or border elaborately wrought. You can imagine nothing so splendid. It is worth coming the whole distance to see. But every sort of splendour is in perpetual enactment through the means of these churches. Gorgeous processions in the streets, illuminations of windows on festa nights; lighting up of lamps and clustering of flowers before the shrines of saints; all manner of show and display. The doors of the churches stand wide open; and in this hot weather great red curtains flutter and wave in their palaces; and if you go and sit in one of these to get out of the sun, you see the queerest figures kneeling against pillars, and the strangest people passing in and out, and vast streams of women in veils (they don't wear bonnets), with great fans in their hands, coming and going, that you are never tired of looking on. Except in the churches, you would suppose the city (at this time of year) to be deserted, the people keep so close within doors. Indeed it is next to impossible to go out into the heat. I have only been into Genoa twice myself. We are deliciously cool here, by comparison; being high, and having the sea-breeze. There is always some shade in the vineyard, too, and underneath the rocks on the seashore; so if I choose to saunter I can do it easily, even in the hot time of the day.

I am as lazy, however, as — as you are, and do little but eat and drink and read.

As I am going to transmit regular accounts of all sight-seeings and journeyings to Forster, who will show them to you, I will not bore you with descriptions, however. I hardly think you allow enough for the great brightness and brilliancy of colour which is commonly achieved on the Continent, in that same fresco painting. I saw some — by a French artist and his pupil — in progress at the cathedral at Avignon, which was as bright and airy as anything can be, — nothing dull or dead about it; and I have observed quite fierce and glaring colours elsewhere.

We have a piano now (there was none in the house), and have fallen into a pretty settled easy track. We breakfast about half-past nine or ten, dine about four, and go to bed about eleven. We are much courted by the visiting people, of course, and I very much resort to my old habit of bolting from callers, and leaving their reception to Kate. Green figs I have already learnt to like. Green almonds (we have them at dessert every day) are the most delicious fruit in the world. And green lemons, combined with some rare hollands that is to be got here, make prodigious punch, I assure you. You ought to come over, Mac; but I don't expect you, though I am sure it would be a very good move for you. I have not the smallest doubt of that. Fletcher has made a sketch of the house, and will copy it in pen-and-ink for transmission to you in my next letter. I shall look out for a place in Genoa, between this and the winter-time. In the mean time, the people who come out here breathe delightedly, as if they had got into another climate. Landing in the city, you would hardly suppose it possible that there could be such an air within two miles.

Write to me as often as you can, like a dear good fellow, and rely upon the punctuality of my correspondence. Losing you and Forster is like losing my arms and legs, and dull and lame I am without you. But at Broadstairs next year, please God, when it is all over, I shall be very glad to have laid up such a store of recollections and improvement.

I don't know what to do with Timber. He is as ill-adapted to the climate at this time of year as a suit of fur. I have had him made a lion dog; but the fleas flock in such crowds into the hair he has left that they drive him nearly frantic, and

render it absolutely necessary that he should be kept by himself. Of all the miserable hideous little frights you ever saw, you never beheld such a devil. Apropos, as we were crossing the Seine within two stages of Paris, Roche suddenly said to me, sitting by me on the box: "The littel dog 'ave got a great lip!" I was thinking of things remote and very different, and could n't comprehend why any peculiarity in this feature on the part of the dog should excite a man so much. As I was musing upon it, my ears were attracted by shouts of "Helo! hola! Hi, hi, hi! Le voilà! Regardez!" and the like. And looking down among the oxen — we were in the centre of a numerous drove — I saw him, Timber, lying in the road, curled up — you know his way — like a lobster, only not so stiff, yelping dismally in the pain of his "lip" from the roof of the carriage; and between the aching of his bones, his horror of the oxen, and his dread of me (who he evidently took to be the immediate agent in and cause of the damage), singing out to an extent which I believe to be perfectly unprecedented; while every Frenchman and French boy within sight roared for company. He was n't hurt.

Kate and Georgina send their best loves; and the children add "theirs." Katey, in particular, desires to be commended to "Mr. Teese." She has a sore throat; from sitting in constant draughts, I suppose; but with that exception, we are all quite well. Ever believe me, my dear Mac,

Your affectionate friend.

LXXXVII. CLARKSON STANFIELD

ALBARO, Saturday Night, August 24, 1844.

MY DEAR STANFIELD, — I love you so truly, and have such pride and joy of heart in your friendship, that I don't know how to begin writing to you. When I think how you are walking up and down London in that portly surtout, and can't receive proposals from Dick to go to the theatre, I fall into a state between laughing and crying, and want some friendly back to smite. "Je-im!" "Ay, ay, your honour," is in my ears every time I walk upon the seashore here; and the number of expeditions I make into Cornwall in my sleep, the springs of Flys I break, the songs I sing, and the bowls of punch I drink, would soften a heart of stone.

We have had weather here, since five o'clock this morning, after your own heart. Suppose yourself the Admiral in "Black-Eyed Susan" after the acquittal of William, and when it was possible to be on friendly terms with him. I am T. P.[1] My trousers are very full at the ankles, my black neckerchief is tied in the regular style, the name of my ship is painted round my glazed hat, I have a red waistcoat on, and the seams of my blue jacket are "paid" — permit me to dig you in the ribs when I make use of this nautical expression — with white. In my hand I hold the very box connected with the story of Sandomingerbilly. I lift up my eyebrows as far as I can (on the T. P. model), take a quid from the box, screw the lid on again (chewing at the same time, and looking pleasantly at the pit), brush it with my right elbow, take up my right leg, scrape my right foot on the ground, hitch up my trousers, and in reply to a question of yours, namely, "Indeed, what weather, William?" I deliver myself as follows: —

Lord love your honour! Weather! Such weather as would set all hands to the pumps aboard one of your fresh-water cock-boats, and set the purser to his wits' ends to stow away, for the use of the ship's company, the casks and casks full of blue water as would come powering in over the gunnel! The dirtiest night, your honour, as ever you see atween Spithead at gun-fire, and the Bay of Biscay! The wind sou'-west, and your house dead in the wind's eye; the breakers running up high upon the rocky beads, the light'us no more looking through the fog than Davy Jones's sarser eye through the blue sky of heaven in a calm, or the blue toplights of your honour's lady cast down in a modest overhauling of her catheads: avast! (*whistling*) my dear eyes; here am I a goin' head on to the breakers (*bowing*).

Admiral (*smiling*). No, William! I admire plain speaking, as you know, and so does old England, William, and old England's Queen. But you were saying —

William. Ay, ay, your honour (*scratching his head*). I've lost my reckoning. Damme! — I ast pardon — but won't your honour throw a hencoop or any old end of towline to a man as is overboard?

[1] T. P. Cooke, the celebrated actor of William in Douglas Jerrold's play of *Black-Eyed Susan*.

Admiral (*smiling still*). You were saying, William, that the wind —

William (*again cocking his leg, and slapping the thighs very hard*). Avast heaving, your honour! I see your honour's signal fluttering in the breeze, without a glass. As I was a saying, your honour, the wind was blowin' from the sou'-west, due sou'-west, your honour, not a pint to larboard nor a pint to starboard; the clouds a gatherin' in the distance for all the world like Beachy Head in a fog, the sea a rowling in, in heaps of foam, and making higher than the mainyard arm, the craft a scuddin' by all taut and under storms'ils for the harbour; not a blessed star a twinklin' out aloft — aloft, your honour, in the little cherubs' native country — and the spray is flying like the white foam from the Jolly's lips when Poll of Portsea took him for a tailor! (*Laughs.*)

Admiral (*laughing also*). You have described it well, William, and I thank you. But who are these?

Enter Supers in calico jackets to look like cloth, some in brown holland petticoat-trousers and big boots, all with very large buckles. Last Super rolls on a cask, and pretends to keep it. Other Supers apply their mugs to the bunghole and drink, previously holding them upside down.

William (*after shaking hands with everybody*). Who are these, your honour! Messmates as staunch and true as ever broke biscuit. Ain't you, my lads?

All. Ay, ay, William. That we are! that we are!

Admiral (*much affected*). Oh, England, what wonder that — But I will no longer detain you from your sports, my humble friends (ADMIRAL *speaks very low, and looks hard at the orchestra, this being the cue for the dance*) — from your sports, my humble friends. Farewell!

All. Hurrah! hurrah! [*Exit Admiral.*

Voice behind. Suppose the dance, Mr. Stanfield. Are you all ready? Go then!

My dear Stanfield, I wish you would come this way and see me in that Palazzo Peschiere! Was ever man so welcome as I would make you! What a truly gentlemanly action it would be to bring Mrs. Stanfield and the baby. And how Kate and

her sister would wave pocket-handkerchiefs from the wharf in joyful welcome! Ah, what a glorious proceeding!

Do you know this place? Of course you do. I won't bore you with anything about it, for I know Forster reads my letters to you; but what a place it is. The views from the hills here, and the immense variety of prospects of the sea, are as striking, I think, as such scenery can be. Above all, the approach to Genoa, by sea from Marseilles, constitutes a picture which you ought to paint, for nobody else can ever do it! William, you made that bridge at Avignon better than it is. Beautiful as it undoubtedly is, you made it fifty times better. And if I were Morrison, or one of that school (bless the dear fellows one and all), I would n't stand it, but would insist on having another picture gratis, to atone for the imposition.

The night is like a seaside night in England towards the end of September. They say it is the prelude to clear weather. But the wind is roaring now, and the sea is raving, and the rain is driving down, as if they had all set in for a real hearty picnic, and each had brought its own relations to the general festivity. I don't know whether you are acquainted with the coast-guard and men in these parts? They are extremely civil fellows, of a very amiable manner and appearance, but the most innocent men in matters you would suppose them to be well acquainted with, in virtue of their office, that I ever encountered. One of them asked me only yesterday, if it would take a year to get to England in a ship. Which I thought for a coast-guard man was rather a tidy question. It would take a long time to catch a ship going there if he were on board a pursuing cutter though. I think he would scarcely do it in twelve months, indeed.

So you were at Astley's t' other night. "Now, Mr. Stickney, sir, what can I come for to go for to do for to bring for to fetch for to carry for you, sir?" "He, he, he! Oh, I say, sir!" "Well, sir?" "Miss Woolford knows me, sir. She laughed at me!" I see him run away after this; not on his feet, but on his knees and the calves of his legs alternately; and that smell of sawdusty horses, which was never in any other place in the world, salutes my nose with painful distinctness. What do you think of my suddenly finding myself a swimmer? But I have really made the discovery, and skim about a little blue bay just below the town here, like a fish in high spirits. I hope to preserve my bathing-dress for your inspection and

approval, or possibly to enrich your collection of Italian costumes on my return. Do you recollect Yarnold in "Masaniello"? I fear that I, unintentionally, "dress at him," before plunging into the sea. I enhanced the likeness very much, last Friday morning, by singing a barcarole on the rocks. I was a trifle too flesh-coloured (the stage knowing no medium between bright salmon and dirty yellow), but apart from that defect, not badly made up by any means. When you write to me, my dear Stanny, as I hope you will soon, address Poste Restante, Genoa. I remain out here until the end of September, and send in for my letters daily. There is a postman for this place, but he gets drunk and loses the letters; after which he calls to say so, and to fall upon his knees. About three weeks ago I caught him at a wine-shop near here, playing bowls in the garden. It was then about five o'clock in the afternoon, and he had been airing a newspaper addressed to me, since nine o'clock in the morning.

Kate and Georgina unite with me in most cordial remembrances to Mrs. and Miss Stanfield, and to all the children. They particularise all sorts of messages, but I tell them that they had better write themselves if they want to send any. Though I don't know that this writing would end in the safe deliverance of the commodities after all; for when I began this letter, I meant to give utterance to all kinds of heartiness, my dear Stanfield; and I come to the end of it without having said anything more than that I am — which is new to you — under every circumstance and everywhere,

Your most affectionate friend.

LXXXVIII. JOHN FORSTER

GENOA, September 30, 1844.

Let me tell you of a curious dream I had last Monday night; and of the fragments of reality I can collect, which helped to make it up. I have had a return of rheumatism in my back, and knotted round my waist like a girdle of pain; and had lain awake nearly all that night under the infliction, when I fell asleep and dreamed this dream. Observe that throughout I was as real, animated, and full of passion as Macready (God bless him!) in the last scene of "Macbeth." In an indistinct place, which was quite sublime in its indistinctness, I was visited

by a Spirit. I could not make out the face, nor do I recollect that I desired to do so. It wore a blue drapery, as the Madonna might in a picture by Raphael; and bore no resemblance to any one I have known except in stature. I think (but I am not sure) that I recognised the voice. Anyway, I knew it was poor Mary's spirit. I was not at all afraid, but in a great delight, so that I wept very much, and stretching out my arms to it called it "Dear." At this, I thought it recoiled; and I felt immediately, that not being of my gross nature, I ought not to have addressed it so familiarly. "Forgive me!" I said. "We poor living creatures are only able to express ourselves by looks and words. I have used the word most natural to *our* affections; and you know my heart." It was so full of compassion and sorrow for me — which I knew spiritually, for, as I have said, I did n't perceive its emotions by its face — that it cut me to the heart; and I said, sobbing, "Oh! give me some token that you have really visited me!" "Form a wish," it said. I thought, reasoning with myself: "If I form a selfish wish it will vanish." So I hastily discarded such hopes and anxieties of my own as came into my mind, and said, "Mrs. Hogarth is surrounded with great distresses" — observe, I never thought of saying "your mother" as to a mortal creature — "will you extricate her?" "Yes." "And her extrication is to be a certainty to me, that this has really happened?" "Yes." "But answer me one other question!" I said, in an agony of entreaty lest it should leave me. "What is the True religion?" As it paused a moment without replying, I said — Good God in such an agony of haste, lest it should go away! — "You think, as I do, that the Form of religion does not so greatly matter, if we try to do good? or," I said, observing that it still hesitated, and was moved with the greatest compassion for me, "perhaps the Roman Catholic is the best? perhaps it makes one think of God oftener, and believe in him more steadily?" "For *you*," said the Spirit, full of such heavenly tenderness for me, that I felt as if my heart would break; "for *you*, it is the best!" Then I awoke, with the tears running down my face, and myself in exactly the condition of the dream. It was just dawn. I called up Kate, and repeated it three or four times over, that I might not unconsciously make it plainer or stronger afterwards. It was exactly this. Free from all hurry, nonsense, or confusion, whatever. Now, the strings I

can gather up, leading to this, were three. The first you know, from the main subject of my last letter. The second was, that there is a great altar in our bedroom, at which some family who once inhabited this palace had mass performed in old time; and I had observed within myself, before going to bed, that there was a mark in the wall, above the sanctuary, where a religious picture used to be; and I had wondered within myself what the subject might have been, *and what the face was like.* Thirdly, I had been listening to the convent bells (which ring at intervals in the night), and so had thought, no doubt, of Roman Catholic services. And yet, for all this, put the case of that wish being fulfilled by any agency in which I had no hand; and I wonder whether I should regard it as a dream, or an actual Vision!

LXXXIX. MRS. CHARLES DICKENS

PARMA, ALBERGO DELLA POSTA, Friday, November 8, 1844.

MY DEAREST KATE, — "If missis could see us to-night, what would she say?" That was the brave C.'s remark last night at midnight, and he had reason. We left Genoa, as you know, soon after five on the evening of my departure; and in company with the lady whom you saw, and the dog whom I don't think you did see, travelled all night at the rate of four miles an hour over bad roads, without the least refreshment until daybreak, when the brave and myself escaped into a miserable café while they were changing horses, and got a cup of that drink hot. That same day, a few hours afterwards, between ten and eleven, we came to (I hope) the d——dest inn in the world, where, in a vast chamber, rendered still more desolate by the presence of a most offensive specimen of what D'Israeli calls the Mosaic Arab (who had a beautiful girl with him), I regaled upon a breakfast, almost as cold, and damp, and cheerless, as myself. Then, in another coach, much smaller than a small Fly, I was packed up with an old padre, a young Jesuit, a provincial avvocato, a private gentleman with a very red nose and a very wet brown umbrella, and the brave C. and I went on again at the same pace through the mud and rain until four in the afternoon, when there was a place in the coupé (two indeed), which I took, holding that select compartment in company with a very ugly but very agreeable Tuscan "gent," who said "*gia*" in-

stead of "*si*," and rung some other changes in this changing language, but with whom I got on very well, being extremely conversational. We were bound, as you know, perhaps, for Piacenza, but it was discovered that we could n't get to Piacenza, and about ten o'clock at night we halted at a place called Stradella, where the inn was a series of queer galleries open to the night, with a great courtyard full of wagons and horses, and "*velociferi*," and what not in the centre. It was bitter cold and very wet, and we all walked into a bare room (mine!) with two immensely broad beds on two deal dining-tables, a third great empty table, the usual washing-stand tripod, with a slop-basin on it, and two chairs. And then we walked up and down for three quarters of an hour or so, while dinner, or supper, or whatever it was, was getting ready. This was set forth (by way of variety) in the old priest's bedroom, which had two more immensely broad beds on two more deal dining-tables in it. The first dish was a cabbage boiled in a great quantity of rice and hot water, the whole flavoured with cheese. I was so cold that I thought it comfortable, and so hungry that a bit of cabbage, when I found such a thing floating my way, charmed me. After that we had a dish of very little pieces of pork, fried with pigs' kidneys; after that a fowl; after that something very red and stringy, which I think was veal; and after that, two tiny little new-born-baby-looking turkeys, very red and very swollen. Fruit, of course, to wind up, and garlic in one shape or another in every course. I made three jokes at supper (to the immense delight of the company), and retired early. The Brave brought in a bush or two and made a fire, and after that a glass of screeching hot brandy and water; that bottle of his being full of brandy. I drank it at my leisure, undressed before the fire, and went into one of the beds. The Brave reappeared about an hour afterwards and went into the other; previously tying a pocket-handkerchief round and round his head in a strange fashion, and giving utterance to the sentiment with which this letter begins. At five this morning we resumed our journey, still through mud and rain, and at about eleven arrived at Piacenza; where we fellow passengers took leave of one another in the most affectionate manner. As there was no coach on till six at night, and as it was a very grim, despondent sort of place, and as I had had enough of diligences for one while, I posted forward here in the strangest carriages

ever beheld, which we changed when we changed horses. We arrived here before six. The hotel is quite French. I have dined very well in my own room on the second floor; and it has two beds in it, screened off from the room by drapery. I only use one to-night, and that is already made.

I purpose posting on to Bologna, if I can arrange it, at twelve to-morrow; seeing the sights here first.

It is dull work this travelling alone. My only comfort is in motion. I look forward with a sort of shudder to Sunday, when I shall have a day to myself in Bologna; and I think I must deliver my letters in Venice in sheer desperation. Never did anybody want a companion after dinner so much as I do.

There has been music on the landing outside my door to-night. Two violins and a violoncello. One of the violins played a solo, and the others struck in as an orchestra does now and then, very well. Then he came in with a small tin platter. "Bella musica," said I. "Bellissima musica, signore. Mi piace moltissimo. Sono felice, signore," said he. I gave him a franc. "O moltissimo generoso. Tanto generoso signore!"

It was a joke to laugh at when I was learning, but I swear unless I could stagger on, Zoppa-wise, with the people, I verily believe I should have turned back this morning.

In all other respects I think the entire change has done me undoubted service already. I am free of the book, and am red-faced; and feel marvellously disposed to sleep.

So for all the straggling qualities of this straggling letter, want of sleep must be responsible. Give my best love to Georgy, and my paternal blessing to

Mamey,
Katey,
Charley,
Walley,
and
Chickenstalker.

P. S. — Get things in their places. I can't bear to picture them otherwise.

P. P. S. — I think I saw Roche sleeping with his head on

the lady's shoulder, in the coach. I could n't swear it, and the light was deceptive. But I think I did.

Alla sign.
Sign.r Dickens.
Palazzo Peschiere, Genova.

XC. DOUGLAS JERROLD

CREMONA, Saturday Night, November 16, 1844.

MY DEAR JERROLD, — As half a loaf is better than no bread, so I hope that half a sheet of paper may be better than none at all, coming from one who is anxious to live in your memory and friendship. I should have redeemed the pledge I gave you in this regard long since, but occupation at one time, and absence from pen and ink at another, have prevented me.

Forster has told you, or will tell you, that I very much wish you to hear my little Christmas book;[1] and I hope you will meet me, at his bidding, in Lincoln's Inn Fields. I have tried to strike a blow upon that part of the brass countenance of wicked Cant, when such a compliment is sorely needed at this time, and I trust that the result of my training is at least the exhibition of a strong desire to make it a staggerer. If *you* should think at the end of the four rounds (there are no more) that the said Cant, in the language of "Bell's Life," "comes up piping," I shall be very much the better for it.

I am now on my way to Milan; and from thence (after a day or two's rest) I mean to come to England by the grandest Alpine pass that the snow may leave open. You know this place as famous of yore for fiddles. I don't see any here now. But there is a whole street of coppersmiths not far from this inn; and they throb so d——ably and fitfully, that I thought I had a palpitation of the heart after dinner just now, and seldom was more relieved than when I found the noise to be none of mine.

I was rather shocked yesterday (I am not strong in geographical details) to find that Romeo was only banished twenty-five miles. That is the distance between Mantua and Verona. The latter is a quaint old place, with great houses in it that are now solitary and shut up — exactly the place it ought to be. The

[1] *The Chimes.*

former has a great many apothecaries in it at this moment, who could play that part to the life. For of all the stagnant ponds I ever beheld, it is the greenest and weediest. I went to see the old palace of the Capulets, which is still distinguished by their cognisance (a hat carved in stone on the courtyard wall). It is a miserable inn. The court was full of crazy coaches, carts, geese, and pigs, and was ankle-deep in mud and dung. The garden is walled off and built out. There was nothing to connect it with its old inhabitants, and a very unsentimental lady at the kitchen door. The Montagues used to live some two or three miles off in the country. It does not appear quite clear whether they ever inhabited Verona itself. But there is a village bearing their name to this day, and traditions of the quarrels between the two families are still as nearly alive as anything can be, in such a drowsy neighbourhood.

It was very hearty and good of you, Jerrold, to make that affectionate mention of the "Carol" in "Punch," and I assure you it was not lost on the distant object of your manly regard, but touched him as you wished and meant it should. I wish we had not lost so much time in improving our personal knowledge of each other. But I have so steadily read you, and so selfishly gratified myself in always expressing the admiration with which your gallant truths inspired me, that I must not call it time lost, either.

You rather entertained a notion, once, of coming to see me at Genoa. I shall return straight, on the 9th of December, limiting my stay in town to one week. Now could n't you come back with me? The journey, that way, is very cheap, costing little more than twelve pounds; and I am sure the gratification to you would be high. I am lodged in quite a wonderful place, and would put you in a painted room, as big as a church and much more comfortable. There are pens and ink upon the premises; orange-trees, gardens, battledores and shuttlecocks, rousing wood fires for evenings, and a welcome worth having.

Come! Letter from a gentleman in Italy to Bradbury and Evans in London. Letter from a gentleman in a country gone to sleep to a gentleman in a country that would go to sleep too, and never wake again, if some people had their way. You can work in Genoa. The house is used to it. It is exactly a week's post. Have that portmanteau looked to, and when we meet, say, "I am coming."

I have never in my life been so struck by any place as by Venice. It is *the* wonder of the world. Dreamy, beautiful, inconsistent, impossible, wicked, shadowy, d——able old place. I entered it by night, and the sensation of that night and the bright morning that followed is a part of me for the rest of my existence. And, O God! the cells below the water, underneath the Bridge of Sighs; the nook where the monk came at midnight to confess the political offender; the bench where he was strangled; the deadly little vault in which they tied him in a sack, and the stealthy crouching little door through which they hurried him into a boat, and bore him away to sink him where no fisherman dare cast his net — all shown by torches that blink and wink, as if they were ashamed to look upon the gloomy theatre of sad horrors; past and gone as they are, these things stir a man's blood, like a great wrong or passion of the instant. And with these in their minds, and with a museum there, having a chamber full of such frightful instruments of torture as the devil in a brain fever could scarcely invent, there are hundreds of parrots, who will declaim to you in speech and print, by the hour together, on the degeneracy of the times in which a railroad is building across the water at Venice; instead of going down on their knees, the drivellers, and thanking Heaven that they live in a time when iron makes roads, instead of prison bars and engines for driving screws into the skulls of innocent men. Before God, I could almost turn bloody-minded, and shoot the parrots of our island with as little compunction as Robinson Crusoe shot the parrots in his.

I have not been in bed, these ten days, after five in the morning, and have been travelling many hours every day. If this be the cause of my inflicting a very stupid and sleepy letter on you, my dear Jerrold, I hope it will be a kind of signal at the same time, of my wish to hail you lovingly even from this sleepy and unpromising state. And believe me as I am,

Always your friend and admirer.

XCI. MRS. CHARLES DICKENS

FRIBOURG, Saturday Night, November 23, 1844.

MY DEAREST KATE, — For the first time since I left you I am sitting in a room of my own hiring, with a fire and a bed in it. And I am happy to say that I have the best and fullest

intentions of sleeping in the bed, having arrived here at half-past four this afternoon, without any cessation of travelling, night or day, since I parted from Mr. Bairr's cheap firewood.

The Alps appeared in sight very soon after we left Milan — by eight or nine o'clock in the morning; and the brave C. was so far wrong in his calculations that we began the ascent of the Simplon that same night, while you were travelling (as I would I were) towards the Peschiere. Most favourable state of circumstances for journeying up that tremendous pass! The brightest moon I ever saw, all night, and daybreak on the summit. The glory of which, making great wastes of snow a rosy red, exceeds all telling. We *sledged* through the snow on the summit for two hours or so. The weather was perfectly fair and bright, and there was neither difficulty nor danger — except the danger that there always must be, in such a place, of a horse stumbling on the brink of an immeasurable precipice. In which case no piece of the unfortunate traveller would be left large enough to tell his story in dumb show. You may imagine something of the rugged grandeur of such a scene as this great passage of these great mountains, and indeed Glencoe, well sprinkled with snow, would be very like the ascent. But the top itself, so wild, and bleak, and lonely, is a thing by itself, and not to be likened to any other sight. The cold was piercing; the north wind high and boisterous; and when it came driving in our faces, bringing a sharp shower of little points of snow and piercing it into our very blood, it really was, what it is often said to be, "cutting" — with a very sharp edge too. There are houses of refuge here — bleak, solitary places — for travellers overtaken by the snow to hurry to, as an escape from death; and one great house, called the Hospital, kept by monks, where wayfarers get supper and bed for nothing. We saw some coming out and pursuing their journey. If all monks devoted themselves to such uses, I should have little fault to find with them.

The cold in Switzerland, since, has been something quite indescribable. My eyes are tingling to-night as one may suppose cymbals to tingle when they have been lustily played. It is positive pain to me to write. The great organ which I was to have had "pleasure in hearing" don't play on a Sunday, at which the brave is inconsolable. But the town is picturesque and quaint, and worth seeing. And this inn (with

a German bedstead in it about the size and shape of a baby's linen-basket) is perfectly clean and comfortable. Butter is so cheap hereabouts that they bring you a great mass like the squab of a sofa for tea. And of honey, which is most delicious, they set before you a proportionate allowance. We start to-morrow morning at six for Strasburg, and from that town, or the next halting-place on the Rhine, I will report progress, if it be only in half a dozen words.

I am anxious to hear that you reached Genoa quite comfortably, and shall look forward with impatience to that letter which you are to indite with so much care and pains next Monday. My best love to Georgy, and to Charley, and Mamey, and Katey, and Wally, and Chickenstalker. I have treated myself to a new travelling-cap to-night (my old one being too thin), and it is rather a prodigious affair, I flatter myself.

Swiss towns, and mountains, and the Lake of Geneva, and the famous suspension bridge at this place, and a great many other objects (with a very low thermometer conspicuous among them), are dancing up and down me, strangely. But I am quite collected enough, notwithstanding, to have still a very distinct idea that this hornpipe travelling is uncomfortable, and that I would gladly start for my palazzo out of hand without any previous rest, stupid as I am and much as I want it.

Ever, my dear love,
Affectionately yours.

P. S. — I hope the dancing-lessons will be a success. Don't fail to let me know.

XCII. MRS. CHARLES DICKENS

PIAZZA COFFEE HOUSE, COVENT GARDEN,
Monday, December 2, 1844.

MY DEAREST KATE, — I received, with great delight, your *excellent* letter of this morning. Do not regard this as my answer to it. It is merely to say that I have been at Bradbury and Evans's all day, and have barely time to write more than that I *will* write to-morrow. I arrived about seven on Saturday evening, and rushed into the arms of Mac and Forster. Both of them send their best love to you and Georgy, with a heartiness not to be described.

The little book[1] is now, as far as I am concerned, all ready. One cut of Doyle's and one of Leech's I found so unlike my ideas, that I had them both to breakfast with me this morning, and, with that winning manner which you know of, got them with the highest good-humour to do both afresh. They are now hard at it. Stanfield's readiness, delight, wonder at my being pleased with what he has done, is delicious. Mac's frontispiece is charming. The book is quite splendid; the expenses will be very great, I have no doubt.

Anybody who has heard it has been moved in the most extraordinary manner. Forster read it (for dramatic purposes) to A'Beckett. He cried so much and so painfully that Forster did n't know whether to go on or stop; and he called next day to say that any expression of his feeling was beyond his power. But that he believed it, and felt it to be — I won't say what.

As the reading comes off to-morrow night, I had better not despatch my letters to you until *Wednesday's* post. I must close to save this (heartily tired I am, and I dine at Gore House to-day), so with love to Georgy, Mamey, Katey, Charley, Wally, and Chickenstalker, ever believe me,

Yours, with true affection.

P. S. — If you had seen Macready last night, undisguisedly sobbing and crying on the sofa as I read, you would have felt, as I did, what a thing it is to have power.

XCIII. THOMAS MITTON

NAPLES, Monday, February 17, 1845.

MY DEAR MITTON, — This will be a hasty letter, for I am as badly off in this place as in America — beset by visitors at all times and seasons, and forced to dine out every day. I have found, however, an excellent man for me — an Englishman, who has lived here many years, and is well acquainted with *the people*, whom he doctored in the bad time of the cholera, when the priests and everybody else fled in terror.

Under his auspices, I have got to understand the low life of Naples (among the fishermen and idlers) almost as well as I understand the do. do. of my own country; always excepting the language, which is very peculiar and extremely difficult, and

[1] *The Chimes.*

would require a year's constant practice at least. It is no more like Italian than English is to Welsh. And as they don't say half of what they mean, but make a wink or a kick stand for a whole sentence, it 's a marvel to me how they comprehend each other. At Rome they speak beautiful Italian (I am pretty strong at that, I believe); but they are worse here than in Genoa, which I had previously thought impossible.

It is a fine place, but nothing like so beautiful as people make it out to be. The famous bay is, to my thinking, as a piece of scenery, immeasurably inferior to the Bay of Genoa, which is the most lovely thing I have ever seen. The city, in like manner, will bear no comparison with Genoa. But there is none in Italy that will, except Venice. As to houses, there is no palace like the Peschiere for architecture, situation, gardens, or rooms. It is a great triumph to me, too, to find how cheap it is. At Rome, the English people live in dirty little fourth, fifth, and sixth floors, with not one room as large as your own drawing-room, and pay, commonly, seven or eight pounds a week.

I was a week in Rome on my way here, and saw the Carnival, which is perfectly delirious, and a great scene for a description. All the ancient part of Rome is wonderful and impressive in the extreme. Far beyond the possibility of exaggeration as to the modern part, it might be anywhere or anything — Paris, Nice, Boulogne, Calais, or one of a thousand other places.

The weather is so atrocious (rain, snow, wind, darkness, hail, and cold) that I can't get over into Sicily. But I don't care very much about it, as I have planned out ten days of excursion into the neighbouring country. One thing of course — the ascent of Vesuvius, Herculaneum and Pompeii, the two cities which were covered by its melted ashes, and dug out in the first instance accidentally, are more full of interest and wonder than it is possible to imagine. I have heard of some ancient tombs (quite unknown to travellers) dug in the bowels of the earth, and extending for some miles underground. They are near a place called Viterbo, on the way from Rome to Florence. I shall lay in a small stock of torches, etc., and explore them when I leave Rome. I return there on the 1st of March, and shall stay there nearly a month.

Saturday, February 22. — Since I left off as above, I have been away on an excursion of three days. Yesterday evening,

at four o'clock, we began (a small party of six) the ascent of Mount Vesuvius, with six saddle-horses, an armed soldier for a guard, and twenty-two guides. The latter rendered necessary by the severity of the weather, which is greater than has been known for twenty years, and has covered the precipitous part of the mountain with deep snow, the surface of which is glazed with one smooth sheet of ice from the top of the cone to the bottom. By starting at that hour I intended to get the sunset about halfway up, and night at the top, where the fire is raging. It was an inexpressibly lovely night without a cloud; and when the day was quite gone, the moon (within a few hours of the full) came proudly up, showing the sea, and the Bay of Naples, and the whole country, in such majesty as no words can express. We rode to the beginning of the snow and then dismounted. Catherine and Georgina were put into two litters, just chairs with poles, like those in use in England on the 5th of November; and a fat Englishman, who was of the party, was hoisted into a third, borne by eight men. I was accommodated with a tough stick, and we began to plough our way up. The ascent was as steep as this line / — very nearly perpendicular. We were all tumbling at every step; and looking up and seeing the people in advance tumbling over one's very head, and looking down and seeing hundreds of feet of smooth ice below, was, I must confess, anything but agreeable. However, I knew there was little chance of another clear night before I leave this, and gave the word to get up, somehow or other. So on we went, winding a little now and then, or we should not have got on at all. By prodigious exertions we passed the region of snow, and came into that of fire — desolate and awful, you may well suppose. It was like working one's way through a dry waterfall, with every mass of stone burnt and charred into enormous cinders, and smoke and sulphur bursting out of every chink and crevice, so that it was difficult to breathe. High before us, bursting out of a hill at the top of the mountain, shaped like this A, the fire was pouring out, reddening the night with flames, blackening it with smoke, and spotting it with red-hot stones and cinders that fell down again in showers. At every step everybody fell, now into a hot chink, now into a bed of ashes, now over a mass of cindered iron; and the confusion in the darkness (for the smoke obscured the moon in this part), and the quarrelling and shouting

and roaring of the guides, and the waiting every now and then for somebody who was not to be found, and was supposed to have stumbled into some pit or other, made such a scene of it as I can give you no idea of. My ladies were now on foot, of course; but we dragged them on as well as we could (they were thorough game, and did n't make the least complaint), until we got to the foot of that topmost hill I have drawn so beautifully. Here we all stopped; but the head guide, an English gentleman of the name of Le Gros, — who has been here many years, and has been up the mountain a hundred times, — and your humble servant, resolved (like jackasses) to climb that hill to the brink, and look down into the crater itself. You may form some notion of what is going on inside it, when I tell you that it is a hundred feet higher than it was six weeks ago. The sensation of struggling up it, choked with the fire and smoke, and feeling at every step as if the crust of ground between one's feet and the gulf of fire would crumble in and swallow one up (which is the real danger), I shall remember for some little time, I think. But we did it. We looked down into the flaming bowels of the mountain and came back again, alight in half a dozen places, and burnt from head to foot. You never saw such devils. And *I* never saw anything so awful and terrible.

Roche had been tearing his hair like a madman, and crying that we should all three be killed, which made the rest of the company very comfortable, as you may suppose. But we had some wine in a basket, and all swallowed a little of that and a great deal of sulphur before we began to descend. The usual way, after the fiery part is past, — you will understand that to be all the flat top of the mountain, in the centre of which, again, rises the little hill I have drawn, — is to slide down the ashes, which, slipping from under you, make a gradually increasing ledge under your feet, and prevent your going too fast. But when we came to this steep place last night, we found nothing there but one smooth solid sheet of ice. The only way to get down was for the guides to make a chain, holding by each other's hands, and beat a narrow track in it into the snow below with their sticks. My two unfortunate ladies were taken out of their litters again, with half a dozen men hanging on to each, to prevent their falling forward; and we began to descend this way. It was like a tremendous dream. It was impossible

to stand, and the only way to prevent one's self from going sheer down the precipice, every time one fell, was to drive one's stick into one of the holes the guides had made, and hold on by that. Nobody could pick one up, or stop one, or render one the least assistance. Now, conceive my horror, when this Mr. Le Gros I have mentioned, being on one side of Georgina and I on the other, suddenly staggers away from the narrow path on to the smooth ice, gives us a jerk, lets go, and plunges headforemost down the smooth ice into the black night, five hundred feet below! Almost at the same instant, a man far behind, carrying a light basket on his head with some of our spare cloaks in it, misses his footing and rolls down in another place; and after him, rolling over and over like a black bundle, goes a boy, shrieking as nobody but an Italian can shriek, until the breath is tumbled out of him.

The Englishman is in bed to-day, terribly bruised, but without any broken bones. He was insensible at first and a mere heap of rags; but we got him before the fire, in a little hermitage there is halfway down, and he so far recovered as to be able to take some supper, which was waiting for us there. The boy was brought in with his head tied up in a bloody cloth, about half an hour after the rest of us were assembled. And the man who had had the basket was not found when we left the mountain at midnight. What became of the cloaks (mine was among them) I know as little. My ladies' clothes were so torn off their backs that they would not have been decent, if there could have been any thought of such things at such a time. And when we got down to the guides' house, we found a French surgeon (one of another party who had been up before us) lying on a bed in a stable, with God knows what horrible breakage about him, but suffering acutely and looking like death. A pretty unusual trip for a pleasure expedition, I think!

I am rather stiff to-day, but am quite unhurt, except a slight scrape on my right hand. My clothes are burnt to pieces. My ladies are the wonder of Naples, and everybody is open-mouthed.

Address me as usual. All letters are forwarded. The children well and happy. Best regards.

Ever faithfully.

XCIV. JOHN FORSTER

LUCERNE, June 14, 1845.

We came over the St. Gothard, which has been open only eight days. The road is cut through the snow, and the carriage winds along a narrow path between two massive snow walls, twenty feet high or more. Vast plains of snow range up the mountain-sides above the road, itself seven thousand feet above the sea; and tremendous waterfalls, hewing out arches for themselves in the vast drifts, go thundering down from precipices into deep chasms, here and there and everywhere; the blue water tearing through the white snow with an awful beauty that is most sublime. The pass itself, the mere pass over the top, is not so fine, I think, as the Simplon; and there is no plain upon the summit, for the moment it is reached the descent begins. So that the loneliness and wildness of the Simplon are not equalled *there*. But being much higher, the ascent and the descent range over a much greater space of country; and on both sides there are places of terrible grandeur, unsurpassable, I should imagine, in the world. The Devil's Bridge, terrific! The whole descent between Andermatt (where we slept on Friday night) and Altdorf, William Tell's town, which we passed through yesterday afternoon, is the highest sublimation of all you can imagine in the way of Swiss scenery. O God! what a beautiful country it is! How poor and shrunken, beside it, is Italy in its brightest aspect!

I look upon the coming down from the Great St. Gothard, with a carriage and four horses and only one postilion, as the most dangerous thing that a carriage and horses can do. We had two great wooden logs for drags, and snapped them both like matches. The road is like a geometrical staircase, with horrible depths beneath it; and at every turn it is a toss-up, or seems to be, whether the leaders shall go round or over. The lives of the whole party may depend upon a strap in the harness; and if we broke our rotten harness once yesterday, we broke it at least a dozen times. The difficulty of keeping the horses together in the continual and steep circle is immense. They slip and slide, and get their legs over the traces, and are dragged up against the rocks; carriage, horses, harness, all a confused heap. The Brave, and I, and the postilion, were con-

stantly at work, in extricating the whole concern from a tangle, like a skein of thread. We broke two thick iron chains, and crushed the box of a wheel, as it was; and the carriage is now undergoing repair, under the window, on the margin of the lake: where a woman in short petticoats, a stomacher, and two immensely long tails of black hair hanging down her back very nearly to her heels, is looking on — apparently dressed for a melodrama, but in reality a waitress at this establishment.

If the Swiss villages look beautiful to me in winter, their summer aspect is most charming, most fascinating, most delicious. Shut in by high mountains capped with perpetual snow, and dotting a rich carpet of the softest turf, overshadowed by great trees, they seem so many little havens of refuge from the troubles and miseries of great towns. The cleanliness of the little baby-houses of inns is wonderful to those who come from Italy. But the beautiful Italian manners, the sweet language, the quick recognition of a pleasant look or cheerful word, the captivating expression of a desire to oblige in everything, are left behind the Alps. Remembering them, I sigh for the dirt again; the brick floors, bare walls, unplastered ceilings, and broken windows.

XCV. MACVEY NAPIER

1, Devonshire Terrace, July 28, 1845.

My dear Sir, — As my note is to bear reference to business, I will make it as short and plain as I can. I think I could write a pretty good and a well-timed article on the "Punishment of Death," and sympathy with great criminals, instancing the gross and depraved curiosity that exists in reference to them, by some of the outrageous things that were written, done, and said in recent cases. But as I am not sure that my views would be yours, and as their statement would be quite inseparable from such a paper, I will briefly set down their purport that you may decide for yourself.

Society, having arrived at that state in which it spares bodily torture to the worst criminals, and having agreed, if criminals be put to death at all, to kill them in the speediest way, I consider the question with reference to society, and not at all with reference to the criminal, holding that, in a case of cruel and deliberate murder, he is already mercifully and sparingly treated.

But as a question for the deliberate consideration of all reflective persons, I put this view of the case. With such very repulsive and odious details before us, may it not be well to inquire whether the punishment of death be beneficial to society? I believe it to have a horrible fascination for many of those persons who render themselves liable to it, impelling them onward to the acquisition of a frightful notoriety; and (setting aside the strong confirmation of this idea afforded in individual instances) I presume this to be the case in very badly regulated minds, when I observe the strange fascination which everything connected with this punishment, or the object of it, possesses for tens of thousands of decent, virtuous, well-conducted people, who are quite unable to resist the published portraits, letters, anecdotes, smilings, snuff-takings, of the bloodiest and most unnatural scoundrel with the gallows before him. I observe that this strange interest does not prevail to anything like the same degree where death is not the penalty. Therefore I connect it with the dread and mystery surrounding death in any shape, but especially in this avenging form, and am disposed to come to the conclusion that it produces crime in the criminally disposed, and engenders a diseased sympathy — morbid and bad, but natural and often irresistible — among the well conducted and gentle. Regarding it as doing harm to both these classes, it may even then be right to inquire, whether it has any salutary influence on those small knots and specks of people, mere bubbles in the living ocean, who actually behold its infliction with their proper eyes. On this head it is scarcely possible to entertain a doubt, for we know that robbery, and obscenity, and callous indifference are of no commoner occurrence anywhere than at the foot of the scaffold. Furthermore, we know that all exhibitions of agony and death have a tendency to brutalise and harden the feelings of men, and have always been the most rife among the fiercest people. Again, it is a great question whether ignorant and dissolute persons (ever the great body of spectators, as few others will attend), seeing *that* murder done, and not having seen the other, will not, almost of necessity, sympathise with the man who dies before them, especially as he is shown, a martyr to their fancy, tied and bound, alone among scores, with every kind of odds against him.

I should take all these threads up at the end by a vivid little sketch of the origin and progress of such a crime as Hocker's,

stating a somewhat parallel case, but an imaginary one, pursuing its hero to his death, and showing what enormous harm he does *after* the crime for which he suffers. I should state none of these positions in a positive, sledge-hammer way, but tempt and lure the reader into the discussion of them in his own mind; and so we come to this at last — whether it be for the benefit of society to elevate even this crime to the awful dignity and notoriety of death; and whether it would not be much more to its advantage to substitute a mean and shameful punishment, degrading the deed and the committer of the deed, and leaving the general compassion to expend itself upon the only theme at present quite forgotten in the history, that is to say, the murdered person.

I do not give you this as an outline of the paper, which I think I could make attractive. It is merely an exposition of the inferences to which its whole philosophy must tend.

Always faithfully yours.

XCVI. W. C. MACREADY

ALBION HOTEL, BROADSTAIRS, Sunday, August 17, 1845.

MY DEAR MACREADY, — I have been obliged to communicate with the "Punch" men in reference to Saturday, the 20th, as that day of the week is usually their business dinner day, and I was not quite sure that it could be conveniently altered.

Jerrold now assures me that it can for such a purpose, and that it shall, and therefore consider the play as being arranged to come off on Saturday, the 20th of next month.

I don't know whether I told you that we have changed the farce; and now we are to act "Two O'clock in the Morning," as performed by the inimitable B. at Montreal.

In reference to Bruce Castle school, I think the question set at rest most probably by the fact of there being no vacancy (it is always full) until Christmas, when Howitt's two boys and Jerrold's one go in and fill it up again. But after going carefully through the school, a question would arise in my mind whether the system — a perfectly admirable one; the only recognition of education as a broad system of moral and intellectual philosophy, that I have ever seen in practice — do not require so much preparation and progress in the mind of the boy, as that he shall have come there younger and less

advanced than Willy ; [1] or at all events without that very different sort of school experience which he must have acquired at Brighton. I have no warrant for this doubt, beyond a vague uneasiness suggesting a suspicion of its great probability. On such slight ground I would not hint it to any one but you, who I know will give it its due weight, and no more and no less.

I have the paper setting forth the nature of the higher classical studies, and the books they read. It is the usual course, and includes the great books in Greek and Latin. They have a miscellaneous library, under the management of the boys themselves, of some five or six thousand volumes, and every means of study and recreation, and every inducement to self-reliance and self-exertion that can easily be imagined. As there is no room just now, you can turn it over in your mind again. And if you would like to see the place yourself, when you return to town, I shall be delighted to go there with you. I come home on Wednesday. It is our rehearsal night ; and of course the active and enterprising stage-manager must be at his post.

Ever, my dear Macready,

Affectionately yours.

XCVII. CLARKSON STANFIELD

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, October 2, 1845.

MY DEAR STANNY, — I send you the claret jug. But for a mistake, you would have received the little remembrance almost immediately after my return from abroad.

I need not say how much I should value another little sketch from your extraordinary hand in this year's small volume, to which Mac again does the frontispiece. But I cannot hear of it, and will not have it (though the gratification of such aid, to me, is really beyond all expression), unless you will so far consent to make it a matter of business as to receive, without asking any questions, a cheque in return from the publishers. Do not misunderstand me — though I am not afraid there is much danger of your doing so, for between us misunderstanding is, I hope, not easy. I know perfectly well that nothing can pay you for the devotion of any portion of your time to such a

[1] Macready's son ; the W. M., the younger, to whom Browning inscribed his poem, *The Pied Piper of Hamelin*.

use of your art. I know perfectly well that no terms would induce you to go out of your way, in such a regard, for perhaps anybody else. I cannot, nor do I desire to, vanquish the friendly obligation which help from you imposes on me. But I am not the sole proprietor of these little books; and it would be monstrous in you if you were to dream of putting a scratch into a second one without some shadowy reference to the other partners, ten thousand times more monstrous in me if any consideration on earth could induce me to permit it, which nothing will or shall.

So, see what it comes to. If you will do me a favour on my terms, it will be more acceptable to me, my dear Stanfield, than I can possibly tell you. If you will not be so generous, you deprive me of the satisfaction of receiving it at your hands, and shut me out from that possibility altogether. What a stony-hearted ruffian you must be in such a case!

Ever affectionately yours.

XCVIII. MACVEY NAPIER

November 10, 1845.

MY DEAR SIR, — I write to you in great haste. I most bitterly regret the being obliged to disappoint and inconvenience you (as I fear I shall do), but I find it will be *impossible* for me to write the paper on "Capital Punishment" for your next number. The fault is really not mine. I have been involved for the last fortnight in one maze of distractions, which nothing could have enabled me to anticipate or prevent. Everything I have had to do has been interfered with and cast aside. I have never in my life had so many insuperable obstacles crowded into the way of my pursuits. It is as little my fault, believe me, as though I were ill and wrote to you from my bed. And pray bear as gently as you can with the vexation I occasion you, when I tell you how very heavily it falls upon myself.

Faithfully yours.

XCIX. MISS MARION ELY[1]

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, Sunday, April 19, 1846.

MY DEAR MISS ELY, — A mysterious emissary brought me a note in your always welcome handwriting at the Athenæum last night. I inquired of the servant in attendance whether the bearer of this letter was of my vast establishment. To which he replied "Yezzir." "Then," said I, "tell him not to wait."

Maclise was with me. It was then half-past seven. We had been walking, and were splashed to the eyes. We debated upon the possibility of getting to Russell Square in reasonable time — decided that it would be in the worst taste to appear when the performance would be half over — and very reluctantly decided not to come. You may suppose how dirty and dismal we were when we went to the Thames Tunnel, of all places in the world, instead!

When I came home here at midnight I found another letter from you (I left off in this place to press it dutifully to my lips). Then my mind misgave me that *you* must have sent to the Athenæum. At the apparent rudeness of my reply, my face, as Hadji Baba says, was turned upside down, and fifty donkeys sat upon my father's grave — or would have done so, but for his not being dead yet.

Therefore I send this humble explanation — protesting, however, which I do most solemnly, against being invited under such untoward circumstances; and claiming as your old friend and no less old admirer to be instantly invited to the next performance, if such a thing is ever contemplated.

Ever, my dear Miss Ely,
Faithfully yours.

C. JOHN FORSTER

ROSEMONT, LAUSANNE, June 28, 1846.

I have not been idle since I have been here, though at first I was "kept out" of the big box as you know. I had a good deal to write for Lord John about the Ragged schools. I set to work and did that. A good deal for Miss Coutts, in refer-

[1] A niece of Lady Talfourd.

ence to her charitable projects. I set to work and did *that.* Half of the children's New Testament to write, or pretty nearly. I set to work and did *that.* Next I cleared off the greater part of such correspondence as I had rashly pledged myself to; and then, . . .

BEGAN DOMBEY!

I performed this feat yesterday — only wrote the first slip — but there it is, and it is a plunge straight over head and ears into the story. . . . Besides all this, I have really gone with great vigour at the French, where I find myself greatly assisted by the Italian; and am subject to two descriptions of mental fits in reference to the Christmas book: one, of the suddenest and wildest enthusiasm; one, of solitary and anxious consideration. . . . By the way, as I was unpacking the big box I took hold of a book, and said to "Them," — "Now, whatever passage my thumb rests on, I shall take as having reference to my work." It was TRISTRAM SHANDY, and opened at these words, "What a work it is likely to turn out! Let us begin it!"

CI. JOHN FORSTER

August 2, 1846.

I begin my letter to-night, but only begin, for we returned from Chamounix in time for dinner just now, and are pretty considerably done up. We went by a mountain pass not often crossed by ladies, called the Col de Balme, where your imagination may picture Kate and Georgy on mules *for ten hours at a stretch,* riding up and down the most frightful precipices. We returned by the pass of the Tête Noire, which Talfourd knows, and which is of a different character, but astonishingly fine too. Mont Blanc, and the Valley of Chamounix, and the Mer de Glace, and all the wonders of that most wonderful place, are above and beyond one's wildest expectations. I cannot imagine anything in nature more stupendous or sublime. If I were to write about it now, I should quite rave — such prodigious impressions are rampant within me. . . . You may suppose that the mule-travelling is pretty primitive. Each person takes a carpet-bag strapped on the mule behind himself or herself; and that is all the baggage that can be carried. A guide, a thoroughbred mountaineer, walks all the way, leading the lady's mule;

I say the lady's *par excellence*, in compliment to Kate; and all the rest struggle on as they please. The cavalcade stops at a lone hut for an hour and a half in the middle of the day, and lunches brilliantly on whatever it can get. Going by that Col de Balme pass, you climb up and up and up for five hours and more, and look — from a mere unguarded ledge of path on the side of the precipice — into such awful valleys that at last you are firm in the belief that you have got above everything in the world, and that there can be nothing earthly overhead. Just as you arrive at this conclusion, a different (and O Heaven! what a free and wonderful) air comes blowing on your face; you cross a ridge of snow; and lying before you (wholly unseen till then), towering up into the distant sky, is the vast range of Mont Blanc, with attendant mountains diminished by its majestic side into mere dwarfs tapering up into innumerable rude Gothic pinnacles; deserts of ice and snow; forests of firs on mountain-sides, of no account at all in the enormous scene; villages down in the hollow, that you can shut out with a finger; waterfalls, avalanches, pyramids and towers of ice, torrents, bridges; mountain upon mountain until the very sky is blocked away, and you must look up, overhead, to see it. Good God, what a country Switzerland is, and what a concentration of it is to be beheld from that one spot! And (think of this in Whitefriars and in Lincoln's Inn!) at noon on the second day from here, the first day being but half a one, by the bye, and full of uncommon beauty, you lie down on that ridge and see it all! . . . I think I must go back again (whether you come or not!) and see it again before the bad weather arrives. We have had sunlight, moonlight, a perfectly transparent atmosphere with not a cloud, and the grand plateau on the very summit of Mont Blanc so clear by day and night that it was difficult to believe in intervening chasms and precipices, and almost impossible to resist the idea that one might sally forth and climb up easily. I went into all sorts of places; armed with a great pole with a spike at the end of it, like a leaping-pole, and with pointed irons buckled on to my shoes; and am all but knocked up. I was very anxious to make the expedition to what is called "The Garden," a green spot covered with wild flowers, lying across the Mer de Glace, and among the most awful mountains; but I could find no Englishman at the hotels who was similarly disposed, and the Brave *would n't go*. No, sir! He gave in point blank

(having been horribly blown in a climbing excursion the day before), and could n't stand it. He is too heavy for such work, unquestionably. In all other respects, I think he has exceeded himself on this journey; and if you could have seen him riding a very small mule, up a road exactly like the broken stairs of Rochester Castle, with a brandy-bottle slung over his shoulder, a small pie in his hat, a roast fowl looking out of his pocket, and a mountain staff of six feet long carried crosswise on the saddle before him, you 'd have said so. He was (next to me) the admiration of Chamounix, but he utterly quenched me on the road.

CII. JOHN FORSTER

August 30, 1846.

You can hardly imagine what infinite pains I take, or what extraordinary difficulty I find in getting on FAST. Invention, thank God, seems the easiest thing in the world; and I seem to have such a preposterous sense of the ridiculous, after this long rest, as to be constantly requiring to restrain myself from launching into extravagances in the height of my enjoyment. But the difficulty of going at what I call a rapid pace is prodigious; it is almost an impossibility. I suppose this is partly the effect of two years' ease, and partly of the absence of streets and numbers of figures. I can't express how much I want these. It seems as if they supplied something to my brain, which it cannot bear, when busy, to lose. For a week or a fortnight I can write prodigiously in a retired place (as at Broadstairs), and a day in London sets me up again and starts me. But the toil and labour of writing, day after day, without that magic lantern, is IMMENSE!! I don't say this at all in low spirits, for we are perfectly comfortable here, and I like the place very much indeed, and the people are even more friendly and fond of me than they were in Genoa. I only mention it as a curious fact, which I have never had an opportunity of finding out before. *My* figures seem disposed to stagnate without crowds about them. I wrote very little in Genoa (only "The Chimes"), and fancied myself conscious of some such influence there — but Lord! I had two miles of streets at least, lighted at night, to walk about in; and a great theatre to repair to, every night.

CIII. JOHN FORSTER

GENEVA, October 2, 1846.

And now, sir, I will describe, modestly, tamely, literally, the visit to the small select circle which I promised should make your hair stand on end. In our hotel were Lady A, and Lady B, mother and daughter, who came to the Peschiere shortly before we left it, and who have a deep admiration for your humble servant the inimitable B. They are both very clever. Lady B, extremely well-informed in languages, living and dead; books, and gossip; very pretty; with two little children, and not yet five-and-twenty. Lady A, plump, fresh, and rosy; matronly, but full of spirits and good looks. Nothing would serve them but we *must* dine with them; and accordingly, on Friday at six, we went down to their room. I knew them to be rather odd. For instance, I have known Lady A, *full dressed*, walk alone through the streets of Genoa, the squalid Italian bye-streets, to the Governor's soirée; and announce herself at the palace of state, by knocking at the door. I have also met Lady B, full dressed, without any cap or bonnet, walking a mile to the opera, with all sorts of jingling jewels about her, beside a sedan-chair in which sat enthroned her mamma. Consequently, I was not surprised at such little sparkles in the conversation (from the young lady) as "Oh God, what a sermon we had here, last Sunday!" "And did you ever read such infernal trash as Mrs. Gore's?" —and the like. Still, but for Kate and Georgy (who were decidedly in the way, as we agreed afterwards), I should have thought it all very funny; and as it was, I threw the ball back again, was mighty free and easy, made some rather broad jokes, and was highly applauded. "You smoke, don't you?" said the young lady, in a pause of this kind of conversation. "Yes," I said, "I generally take a cigar after dinner when I am alone." "I'll give you a good 'un," said she, "when we go up stairs." Well, sir, in due course we went up stairs, and there we were joined by an American lady residing in the same hotel, who looked like what we call in old England "a reg'lar Bunter"—fluffy face (rouged); considerable development of figure; one groggy eye; blue satin dress made low, with short sleeves, and shoes of the same. Also a daughter; face likewise fluffy; figure

likewise developed; dress likewise low, with short sleeves, and shoes of the same; and one eye not yet actually groggy, but going to be. American lady married at sixteen; daughter sixteen now, often mistaken for sisters, etc., etc., etc. When that was over, Lady B brought out a cigar-box, and gave me a cigar, made of negrohead she said, which would quell an elephant in six whiffs. The box was full of cigarettes — good large ones, made of pretty strong tobacco; I always smoke them here, and used to smoke them at Genoa, and I knew them well. When I lighted my cigar, Lady B lighted hers, at mine; leaned against the mantelpiece, in conversation with me; put out her stomach, folded her arms, and with her pretty face cocked up sideways and her cigarette smoking away like a Manchester cotton-mill, laughed, and talked, and smoked, in the most gentlemanly manner I ever beheld. Lady A immediately lighted her cigar; American lady immediately lighted hers; and in five minutes the room was a cloud of smoke, with us four in the centre pulling away bravely, while American lady related stories of her "Hookah" up stairs, and described different kinds of pipes. But even this was not all. For presently two Frenchmen came in, with whom, and the American lady, Lady B sat down to whist. The Frenchmen smoked of course (they were really modest gentlemen, and seemed dismayed), and Lady B played for the next hour or two with a cigar continually in her mouth — never out of it. She certainly smoked six or eight. Lady A gave in soon — I think she only did it out of vanity. American lady had been smoking all the morning. I took no more; and Lady B and the Frenchmen had it all to themselves.

Conceive this in a great hotel, with not only their own servants, but half a dozen waiters coming constantly in and out! I showed no atom of surprise; but I never *was* so surprised, so ridiculously taken aback, in my life; for in all my experience of "ladies" of one kind and another, I never saw a woman — not a basket-woman or a gipsy — smoke, before!

CIV. W. C. MACREADY

GENEVA, Saturday, October 24, 1846.

MY DEAR MACREADY, — The welcome sight of your handwriting moves me (though I have nothing to say) to show you mine, and if I could recollect the passage in Virginius I would

paraphrase it, and say, "Does it seem to tremble, boy? Is it a loving autograph? Does it beam with friendship and affection?" all of which I say, as I write, with — O Heaven! — such a splendid imitation of you, and finally give you one of those grasps and shakes with which I have seen you make the young Icilius stagger again.

Here I am, running away from a bad headache as Tristram Shandy ran away from death, and lodging for a week in the Hôtel de l'Ecu de Genève, wherein there is a large mirror shattered by a cannon-ball in the late revolution. A revolution, whatever its merits, achieved by free spirits, nobly generous and moderate, even in the first transports of victory, elevated by a splendid popular education, and bent on freedom from all tyrants, whether their crowns be shaven or golden. The newspapers may tell you what they please. I believe there is no country on earth but Switzerland in which a violent change could have been effected in the Christian spirit shown in this place, or in the same proud, independent, gallant style. Not one halfpennyworth of property was lost, stolen, or strayed. Not one atom of party malice survived the smoke of the last gun. Nothing is expressed in the Government addresses to the citizens but a regard for the general happiness, and injunctions to forget all animosities; which they are practically obeying at every turn, though the late Government (of whose spirit I had some previous knowledge) did load the guns with such material as should occasion gangrene in the wounds, and though the wounded *do* die, consequently, every day, in the hospital, of sores that in themselves were nothing.

You a mountaineer! *You* examine (I have seen you do it) the point of your young son's bâton de montagne before he went up into the snow! And *you* talk of coming to Lausanne in March! Why, Lord love your heart, William Tell, times are changed since you lived at Altorf. There is not a mountain pass open until June. The snow is closing in on all the panorama already. I was at the Great St. Bernard two months ago, and it was bitter cold and frosty then. Do you think I could let you hazard your life by going up any pass worth seeing in bleak March? Never shall it be said that Dickens sacrificed his friend upon the altar of his hospitality! Onward! To Paris! (Cue for band. Dickens points off with truncheon, first entrance P. S. Page delivers gauntlets on one knee. Dickens

puts 'em on, and gradually falls into a fit of musing. Mrs. Dickens lays her hand upon his shoulder. Business. Procession. Curtain.)

It is a great pleasure to me, my dear Macready, to hear from yourself, as I had previously heard from Forster, that you are so well pleased with "Dombey," which is evidently a great success and a great hit, thank God! I felt that Mrs. Brown was strong, but I was not at all afraid of giving as heavy a blow as I could to a piece of hot iron that lay ready at my hand. For that is my principle always, and I hope to come down with some heavier sledge-hammers than that.

I know the lady of whom you write. —— left there only yesterday. The story may arise only in her manner, which is extraordinarily free and careless. He was visiting her here, when I was here last, three weeks ago. I knew her in Italy. It is not her fault if scandal ever leaves her alone, for such a braver of all conventionalities never wore petticoats. But I should be sorry to hear there was anything guilty in her conduct. She is very clever, really learned, very pretty, much neglected by her husband, and only four-and-twenty years of age.

Kate and Georgy send their best loves to Mrs. and Miss Macready and all your house.

Your most affectionate friend.

CV. WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR

PARIS, Sunday, November 22, 1846.

YOUNG MAN, — I will not go there if I can help it. I have not the least confidence in the value of your introduction to the Devil. I can't help thinking that it would be of better use "the other way, the other way," but I won't try it there, either, at present, if I can help it. Your godson says is that your duty? and he begs me to inclose a blush newly blushed for you.

As to writing, I have written to you twenty times and twenty more to that, if you only knew it. I have been writing a little Christmas book, besides, expressly for you. And if you don't like it, I shall go to the font of Marylebone Church as soon as I conveniently can and renounce you: I am not to be trifled with. I write from Paris. I am getting up some French

steam. I intend to proceed upon the longing-for-a-lap-of-blood-at-last principle, and if you *do* offend me, look to it.

We are all well and happy, and they send loves to you by the bushel. We are in the agonies of house-hunting. The people are frightfully civil, and grotesquely extortionate. One man (with a house to let) told me yesterday that he loved the Duke of Wellington like a brother. The same gentleman wanted to hug me round the neck with one hand, and pick my pocket with the other.

Don't be hard upon the Swiss. They are a thorn in the sides of European despots, and a good wholesome people to live near Jesuit-ridden kings on the brighter side of the mountains. My hat shall ever be ready to be thrown up, and my glove ever ready to be thrown down for Switzerland. If you were the man I took you for, when I took you (as a godfather) for better and for worse, you would come to Paris and amaze the weak walls of the house I have n't found yet with that steady snore of yours, which I once heard piercing the door of your bedroom in Devonshire Terrace, reverberating along the bell-wire in the hall, so getting outside into the street, playing Eolian harps among the area railings, and going down the New Road like a blast of a trumpet.

I forgive you your reviling of me: there 's a shovelful of live coals for your head — does it burn? And am, with true affection — does it burn now? —

Ever yours.

CVI. HON. RICHARD WATSON

PARIS, 48, RUE DE COURCELLES, ST. HONORÉ,
Friday, November 27, 1846.

MY DEAR WATSON, — We were housed only yesterday. I lose no time in despatching this memorandum of our whereabouts, in order that you may not fail to write me a line before you come to Paris on your way towards England, letting me know on what day we are to expect you to dinner.

We arrived here quite happily and well. I don't mean here, but at the Hôtel Brighton, in Paris, on Friday evening, between six and seven o'clock. The agonies of house-hunting were frightfully severe. It was one paroxysm for four mortal days. I am proud to express my belief that we are lodged at last in

the most preposterous house in the world. The like of it cannot, and so far as my knowledge goes does not, exist in any other part of the globe. The bedrooms are like opera-boxes. The dining-rooms, staircases, and passages, quite inexplicable. The dining-room is a sort of cavern, painted (ceiling and all) to represent a grove, with unaccountable bits of looking-glass sticking in among the branches of the trees. There is a gleam of reason in the drawing-room. But it is approached through a series of small chambers, like the joints in a telescope, which are hung with inscrutable drapery. The maddest man in Bedlam, having the materials given him, would be likely to devise such a suite, supposing his case to be hopeless and quite incurable.

Pray tell Mrs. Watson, with my best regards, that the dance of the two sisters in the little Christmas book is being done as an illustration by Maclise; and that Stanfield is doing the battle-ground and the outside of the Nutmeg Grater Inn. Maclise is also drawing some smaller subjects for the little story, and they write me that they hope it will be very pretty, and they think that I shall like it. I shall have been in London before I see you, probably, and I hope the book itself will then be on its road to Lausanne to speak for itself, and to speak a word for me too. I have never left so many friendly and cheerful recollections in any place; and to represent me in my absence, its tone should be very eloquent and affectionate indeed.

Well, if I don't turn up again next summer it shall not be my fault. In the mean while, I shall often and often look that way with my mind's eye, and hear the sweet, clear, bell-like voice of —— with the ear of my imagination. In the event of there being any change — but it is not likely — in the appearance of his cravat behind — where it goes up into his head, I mean, and frets against his wig — I hope some of my English friends will apprise me of it, for the love of the great St. Bernard.

I have not seen Lord Normanby yet. I have not seen anything up to this time but houses and lodgings. There seems to be an immense excitement here on the subject of —— however, and a perfectly stupendous sensation getting up. I saw the king the other day coming into Paris. His carriage was surrounded by guards on horseback, and he sat very far back in it, I thought, and drove at a great pace. It was strange to see

the préfect of police on horseback some hundreds of yards in advance, looking to the right and left as he rode, like a man who suspected every twig in every tree in the long avenue.

The English relations look anything but promising, though I understand that the Count St. Aulaire is to remain in London, notwithstanding the newspaper alarms to the contrary. If there be anything like the sensation in England about —— that there is here, there will be a bitter resentment indeed. The democratic society of Paris have announced, this morning, their intention of printing and circulating fifty thousand copies of an appeal in every European language. It is a base business beyond question, and comes at an ill time.

Mrs. Dickens and her sister desire their best regards to be sent to you and their best loves to Mrs. Watson, in which I join, as nearly as I may. Believe me, with great truth,

Very sincerely yours.

CVII. M. CERJAT

PARIS, 48, RUE DE COURCELLES, ST. HONORÉ,
Friday, November 27, 1846.

MY DEAR CERJAT, — When we turned out of your view on that disconsolate Monday, when you so kindly took horse and rode forth to say good-bye, we went on in a very dull and drowsy manner, I can assure you. I could have borne a world of punch in the rumble and been none the worse for it. There was an uncommonly cool inn that night, and quite a monstrous establishment at Auxonne the next night, full of flatulent passages and banging doors. The next night we passed at Montbard, where there is one of the very best little inns in all France. The next at Sens, and so we got here. The roads were bad, but not very for French roads. There was no deficiency of horses anywhere; and after Pontarlier the weather was really not too cold for comfort. They weighed our plate at the frontier custom-house, spoon by spoon, and fork by fork, and we lingered about there, in a thick fog and a hard frost, for three long hours and a half, during which the officials committed all manner of absurdities, and got into all sorts of disputes with my brave courier. This was the only misery we encountered — except leaving Lausanne, and that was enough to last us and *did* last us all the way here. We are living on

it now. I felt, myself, much as I should think the murderer felt on that fair morning when, with his grey-haired victim (those unconscious grey hairs, soon to be bedabbled with blood), he went so far towards heaven as the top of that mountain of St. Bernard without one touch of remorse. A weight is on my breast. The only difference between me and the murderer is, that his weight was guilt and mine is regret.

I have n't a word of news to tell you. I should n't write at all if I were not the vainest man in the world, impelled by a belief that you will be glad to hear from me, even though you hear no more than that I have nothing to say. "Dombey" is doing wonders. It went up, after the publication of the second number, over the thirty thousand. This is such a very large sale, so early in the story, that I begin to think it will beat all the rest. Keeley and his wife are making great preparations for producing the Christmas story, and I have made them (as an old stage-manager) carry out one or two expensive notions of mine about scenery and so forth — in particular a sudden change from the inside of the doctor's house in the midst of the ball to the orchard in the snow — which ought to tell very well. But actors are so bad, in general, and the best are spread over so many theatres, that the "cast" is black despair and moody madness. There is no one to be got for Marion but a certain Miss ——, I am afraid — a pupil of Miss Kelly's, who acted in the private theatricals I got up a year ago. Macready took her afterwards to play Virginia to his Virginius, but she made nothing of it, great as the chance was. I have promised to show her what I mean, as near as I can, and if you will look into the English Opera House on the morning of the 17th, 18th, or 19th of next month, between the hours of eleven and four, you will find me in a very hot and dusty condition, playing all the parts of the piece, to the immense diversion of all the actors, actresses, scene-shifters, carpenters, musicians, chorus people, tailors, dressmakers, scene-painters, and general ragamuffins of the theatre.

Moore, the poet, is very ill — I fear dying. The last time I saw him was immediately before I left London, and I thought him sadly changed and tamed, but not much more so than such a man might be under the heavy hand of time. I believe he suffered severe grief in the death of a son some time ago. The first man I met in Paris was ——, who took hold of me as I was getting into a coach at the door of the hotel. He had n't

a button on his shirt (but I don't think he ever has), and you might have sown what boys call "mustard and cress" in the dust on his coat. I have not seen Lord Normanby yet, as we have only just got a house (the queerest house in Europe!) to lay our heads in; but there seems reason to fear that the growing dissensions between England and France, and the irritation of the French king, may lead to the withdrawal of the minister on each side of the Channel.

Have you cut down any more trees, played any more rubbers, propounded any more teasers to the players at the game of Yes and No? How is the old horse? How is the grey mare? How is Crab (to whom my respectful compliments)? Have you tried the punch yet? if yes, did it succeed? if no, why not? Is Mrs. Cerjat as happy and as well as I would have her, and all your house ditto ditto? Does Haldimand play whist with any science yet? Ha, ha, ha! the idea of his saying *I* had n't any! And are those damask-cheeked virgins, the Miss ——, still sleeping on dewy rose-leaves near the English church?

Remember me to all your house, and most of all to its other head, with all the regard and earnestness that a "numble individual" (as they always call it in the House of Commons) who once travelled with her in a car over a smooth country may charge you with. I have added two lines to the little Christmas book, that I hope both you and she may not dislike. Haldimand will tell you what they are. Kate and Georgy send their kindest loves, and Kate is "going" to write "next week." Believe me always, my dear Cerjat, full of cordial and hearty recollections of this past summer and autumn, and your part in my part of them.

Very faithfully your friend.

CVIII. JOHN FORSTER

48, Rue de Courcelles, Paris,
Sunday Night, December 27, 1846.

My very dear Forster, — Amen, amen. Many merry Christmases, many happy new years, unbroken friendship, great accumulation of cheerful recollections, affection on earth, and heaven at last, for all of us.

I inclose you a letter from Jeffrey, which you may like to

read. *Bring it to me back when you come over.* I have told him all he wants to know. Is it not a strange example of the hazards of writing in numbers that a man like him should form his notion of Dombey and Miss Tox on three months' knowledge? I have asked him the same question, and advised him to keep his eye on both of them as time rolls on.

We had a cold journey here from Boulogne, but the roads were not very bad. The malle poste, however, now takes the trains at Amiens. We missed it by ten minutes, and had to wait three hours — from twelve o'clock until three, in which interval I drank brandy and water, and slept like a top. It is delightful travelling for its speed, that malle poste, and really for its comfort too. But on this occasion it was not remarkable for the last-named quality. The director of the post at Boulogne told me a lamentable story of his son at Paris being ill, and implored me to bring him on. The Brave doubted the representations altogether, but I could n't find it in my heart to say no; so we brought the director, bodkinwise, and being a large man, in a great number of great-coats, he crushed us dismally until we got to the railroad. For two passengers (and it never carries more) it is capital. For three, excruciating.

Write to —— what you have said to me. You need write no more. He is full of vicious fancies and wrong suspicions, even of Hardwick, and I would rather he heard it from you than from me, whom he is not likely to love much in his heart. I doubt it may be but a rusty instrument for want of use, the ——ish heart.

My most important present news is that I am going to take a jorum of hot rum and egg in bed immediately, and to cover myself up with all the blankets in the house. Love from all. I have a sensation in my head, as if it were "on edge." It is still very cold here, but the snow had disappeared on my return, both here and on the road, except within ten miles or so of Boulogne. Ever affectionately.

CIX. COUNTESS OF BLESSINGTON

48, Rue de Courcelles, Paris, January 24, 1847.

My dear Lady Blessington, — I feel very wicked in beginning this note, and deeply remorseful for not having begun and ended it long ago. But *you* know how difficult it is to

dinary place, looking like an old curiosity shop, or the property-room of some gloomy, vast, old theatre. I was much struck by Hugo himself, who looks like a genius as he is, every inch of him, and is very interesting and satisfactory from head to foot. His wife is a handsome woman, with flashing black eyes. There is also a charming ditto daughter of fifteen or sixteen, with ditto eyes. Sitting among old armour and old tapestry, and old coffers, and grim old chairs and tables, and old canopies of state from old palaces, and old golden lions going to play at skittles with ponderous old golden balls, they made a most romantic show and looked like a chapter out of one of his own books. . . .

CX. REV. EDWARD TAGART

PARIS, 48, RUE DE COURCELLES, ST. HONORÉ,
Thursday, January 28, 1847.

MY DEAR SIR, — Before you read any more, I wish you would take those tablets out of your drawer, in which you have put a black mark against my name, and erase it neatly. I don't deserve it, on my word I don't, though appearances are against me, I unwillingly confess.

I had gone to Geneva, to recover from an uncommon depression of spirits, consequent on too much sitting over "Dombey" and the little Christmas book, when I received your letter as I was going out walking, one sunshiny, windy day. I read it on the banks of the Rhone, where it runs, very blue and swift, between two high green hills, with ranges of snowy mountains filling up the distance. Its cordial and unaffected tone gave me the greatest pleasure — did me a world of good — set me up for the afternoon, and gave me an evening's subject of discourse. For I talked to "them" (that is, Kate and Georgy) about those bright mornings at the Peschiere, until bedtime, and threatened to write you such a letter next day as would — I don't exactly know what it was to do, but it was to be a great letter, expressive of all kinds of pleasant things, and perhaps the most genial letter that ever was written.

From that hour to this, I have again and again and again said, "I 'll write to-morrow," and here I am to-day full of penitence — really sorry and ashamed, and with no excuse but my writing-life, which makes me get up and go out, when my morning work is done, and look at pen and ink no more until I begin again.

Besides which, I have been seeing Paris — wandering into hospitals, prisons, dead-houses, operas, theatres, concert-rooms, burial-grounds, palaces, and wine-shops. In my unoccupied fortnight of each month, every description of gaudy and ghastly sight has been passing before me in a rapid panorama. Before that, I had to come here from Switzerland, over frosty mountains in dense fogs, and through towns with walls and drawbridges, and without population, or anything else in particular but soldiers and mud. I took a flight to London for four days, and went and came back over one sheet of snow, sea excepted; and I wish that had been snow too. Then Forster (who is here now, and begs me to send his kindest regards) came to see Paris for himself, and in showing it to him, away I was borne again, like an enchanted rider. In short, I have had no rest in my play; and on Monday I am going to work again. A fortnight hence the play will begin once more; a fortnight after that the work will follow round, and so the letters that I care for go unwritten.

Do you care for French news? I hope not, because I don't know any. There is a melodrama, called "The French Revolution," now playing at the Cirque, in the first act of which there is the most tremendous representation of *a people* that can well be imagined. There are wonderful battles and so forth in the piece, but there is a power and massiveness in the mob which is positively awful. At another theatre, "Clarissa Harlowe" is still the rage. There are some things in it rather calculated to astonish the ghost of Richardson, but Clarissa is very admirably played, and dies better than the original to my thinking; but Richardson is no great favourite of mine, and never seems to me to take his top-boots off, whatever he does. Several pieces are in course of representation, involving rare portraits of the English. In one, a servant, called "Tom Bob," who wears a particularly English waistcoat, trimmed with gold lace and concealing his ankles, does very good things indeed. In another, a Prime Minister of England, who has ruined himself by railway speculations, hits off some of our national characteristics very happily, frequently making incidental mention of "Vishmingster," "Regeenstreet," and other places with which you are well acquainted. "Sir Fakson" is one of the characters in another play — "English to the Core;" and I saw a Lord Mayor of London at one of the small theatres

the other night, looking uncommonly well in a stage-coachman's waistcoat, the order of the Garter, and a very low-crowned, broad-brimmed hat, not unlike a dustman.

I was at Geneva at the time of the revolution. The moderation and mildness of the successful party were beyond all praise. Their appeals to the people of all parties — printed and pasted on the walls — have no parallel that I know of, in history, for their real good sterling Christianity and tendency to promote the happiness of mankind. My sympathy is strongly with the Swiss radicals. They know what Catholicity is; they see, in some of their own valleys, the poverty, ignorance, misery, and bigotry it always brings in its train wherever it is triumphant; and they would root it out of their children's way at any price. I fear the end of the struggle will be that some Catholic power will step in to crush the dangerously well-educated republics (very dangerous to such neighbours); but there is a spirit in the people, or I very much mistake them, that will trouble the Jesuits there many years, and shake their altar-steps for them.

This is a poor return (I look down and see the end of the paper) for your letter, but in its cordial spirit of reciprocal friendship, it is not so bad a one if you could read it as I do, and it eases my mind and discharges my conscience. We are coming home, please God, at the end of March. Kate and Georgy send their best regards to you, and their loves to Mrs. and Miss Tagart and the children. *Our* children wish to live too in *your* children's remembrance. You will be glad, I know, to hear that "Dombey" is doing wonders, and that the Christmas book shot far ahead of its predecessors. I hope you will like *the last chapter of No. 5.* If you can spare me a scrap of your handwriting in token of forgiveness, do; if not, I'll come and beg your pardon on the 31st of March.

Ever believe me,

Cordially and truly yours.

CXI. MISS MARY DICKENS

VICTORIA HOTEL, EUSTON SQUARE, Thursday, March 4, 1847.

MY DEAREST MAMEY, — I have not got much to say, and that's the truth; but I cannot let this letter go into the post without wishing you many many happy returns of your birth-

day, and sending my love to Auntey and to Katey, and to all of them. We were at Mrs. Macready's last night, where there was a little party in honour of Mr. Macready's birthday. We had some dancing, and they wished very much that you and Katey had been there; so did I and your mamma. We have not got back to Devonshire Terrace yet, but are living at an hotel until Sir James Duke returns from Scotland, which will be on Saturday or Monday. I hope when he comes home and finds us here he will go out of Devonshire Terrace, and let us get it ready for you. Roche is coming back to you very soon. He will leave here on Saturday morning. He says he hopes you will have a very happy birthday, and he means to drink your health on the road to Paris.

Always your affectionate.

CXII. MISS HOGARTH

CHESTER PLACE, Tuesday Night.

MY DEAREST GEORGY,—. . . So far from having "got through my agonies," as you benevolently hope, I have not yet begun them. No, on this *ninth of the month* I have not yet written a single slip. What could I do; house-hunting at first, and beleaguered all day to-day and yesterday by furniture that must be altered, and things that must be put away? My wretchedness, just now, is inconceivable. Tell Anne, by the bye (not with reference to my wretchedness, but in connection with the arrangements generally), that I can't get on at all without her.

If Kate has not mentioned it, get Katey and Mamey to write and send a letter to Charley; of course not hinting at our being here. He wants to hear from them.

Poor little Hall[1] is dead, as you will have seen, I dare say, in the paper.

This house is very cheerful on the drawing-room floor and above, looking into the park on one side and Albany Street on the other. Forster is mild. Maclise, exceedingly bald on the crown of his head. Roche has just come in to know if he may "blow datter light." Love to all the darlings. Regards to everybody else. Love to yourself.

Ever affectionately.

[1] Of the firm of Chapman and Hall.

CXIII. DR. HODGSON[1]

REGENT'S PARK, LONDON, June 12, 1847.

MY DEAR SIR, — I write to you in reference to a scheme to which you may, perhaps, already have seen some allusion in the London "Athenæum" of to-day.

The party of amateurs connected with literature and art, who acted in London two years ago, have resolved to play again at one of the large theatres here for the benefit of Leigh Hunt, and to make a great appeal to all classes of society in behalf of a writer who should have received long ago, but has not yet, some enduring return from his country for all he has undergone and all the good he has done. It is believed that such a demonstration by literature on behalf of literature, and such a mark of sympathy by authors and artists, for one who has written so well, would be of more service, present and prospective, to Hunt than almost any other means of help that could be devised. And we know, from himself, that it would be most gratifying to his own feelings.

The arrangements are, as yet, in an imperfect state; for the date of their being carried out depends on our being able to get one of the large theatres before the close of the present London season. In the event of our succeeding, we purpose acting in London, on Wednesday the 14th of July, and on Monday the 19th. On the first occasion we shall play "Every Man in His Humour," and a farce; on the second, "The Merry Wives of Windsor," and a farce.

But we do not intend to stop here. Believing that Leigh Hunt has done more to instruct the young men of England, and to lend a helping hand to those who educate themselves, than any writer in England, we are resolved to come down, in a body, to Liverpool and Manchester, and to act one night at each place. And the object of my letter is to ask you, as the representative of the great educational establishment of Liverpool, whether we can count on your active assistance; whether you will form a committee to advance our object; and whether, if we send you our circulars and addresses, you will endeavour to secure us a full theatre, and to enlist the general sympathy and interest in behalf of the cause we have at heart?

[1] Principal of the Liverpool Institute.

I address, by this post, a letter, which is almost the counterpart of the present, to the honorary secretaries of the Manchester Athenæum. If we find in both towns such a response as we confidently expect, I would propose, on behalf of my friends, that the Liverpool and Manchester Institutions should decide for us at which town we shall first appear, and which play we shall act in each place.

I forbear entering into any more details, however, until I am favoured with your reply.

Always believe me, my dear sir,
Faithfully your friend.

CXIV. MISS MARGUERITE POWER [1]

BROADSTAIRS, KENT, July 2, 1847.

MY DEAR MISS POWER, — Let me thank you, very sincerely, for your kind note and for the little book. I read the latter on my way down here with the greatest pleasure. It is a charming story gracefully told, and very gracefully and worthily translated. I have not been better pleased with a book for a long time.

I cannot say I take very kindly to the illustrations. They are a long way behind the tale to my thinking. The artist understands it very well, I dare say, but does not express his understanding of it, in the least degree, to any sense of mine.

Ah Rosherville! That fated Rosherville, when shall we see it! Perhaps in one of those intervals when I am up to town from here, and suddenly appear at Gore House, somebody will propose an excursion there, next day. If anybody does, somebody else will be ready to go. So this deponent maketh oath and saith.

I am looking out upon a dark grey sea, with a keen north-east wind blowing it in shore. It is more like late autumn than midsummer, and there is a howling in the air as if the latter were in a very hopeless state indeed. The very Banshee of Midsummer is rattling the windows drearily while I write. There are no visitors in the place but children, and they (my own included) have all got the whooping-cough, and go about the beach choking incessantly. A miserable wanderer lectured in a library last night about astronomy; but being in utter

[1] Niece of the Countess of Blessington.

solitude he snuffed out the transparent planets he had brought with him in a box and fled in disgust. A white mouse and a little tinkling box of music that stops at "come," in the melody of the Buffalo Gals, and can't play "out to-night," are the only amusements left.

I beg from my solitude to send my love to Lady Blessington, and your sister, and Count D'Orsay. I think of taming spiders, as Baron Trenck did. There is one in my cell (with a speckled body and twenty-two very decided knees) who seems to know me.

Dear Miss Power,
Faithfully yours ever.

CXV. MR. H. P. SMITH[1]

BROADSTAIRS, July 9, 1847.

MY DEAR SMITH, — I am really more obliged to you for your kindness about "The Eagle" (as I always call your house) than I can say. But when I come to town to-morrow week, for the Liverpool and Manchester plays, I shall have Kate and Georgy with me. Moreover, I shall be continually going out and coming in at unholy hours. Item, the timid will come at impossible seasons to "go over" their parts with the manager. Item, two Jews with musty sacks of dresses will be constantly coming backwards and forwards. Item, sounds as of "groans" will be heard while the inimitable Boz is "getting" his words — which happens all day. Item, Forster will incessantly deliver an address by Bulwer. Item, one hundred letters per diem will arrive from Manchester and Liverpool; and five actresses, in very limp bonnets, with extraordinary veils attached to them, will be always calling, protected by five mothers.

No, no, my actuary. Some congenial tavern is the fitting scene for these things, if I don't get into Devonshire Terrace, whereof I have some spark of hope. Eagles could n't look the sun in the face and have such enormities going on in their nests.

I am, for the time, that obscene thing, in short, now chronicled in the Marylebone Register of Births —

A PLAYER,
Though still yours.

[1] Of the Eagle Life Assurance Company.

CXVI. MISS MARGUERITE POWER

BROADSTAIRS, KENT, Tuesday, July 14, 1847.

MY DEAR MISS POWER, — Though I am hopeless of Rosherville until after the 28th — for am I not beckoned, by angels of charity and by local committees, to Manchester and Liverpool, and to all sorts of bedevilments (if I may be allowed the expression) in the way of managerial miseries in the mean time — here I find myself falling into parenthesis within parenthesis, like Lord Brougham — yet will I joyfully come up to London on Friday, to dine at your house and meet the Dane,[1] whose Books I honour, and whose — to make the sentiment complete, I want something that would sound like "Bones, I love!" but I can't get anything that unites reason with beauty. You, who have genius and beauty in your own person, will supply the gap in your kindness.

An advertisement in the newspapers mentioning the dinner-time will be esteemed a favour.

Some wild beasts (in cages) have come down here, and involved us in a whirl of dissipation. A young lady in complete armour — at least, in something that shines very much, and is exceedingly scaly — goes into the den of ferocious lions, tigers, leopards, etc., and pretends to go to sleep upon the principal lion, upon which a rustic keeper, who speaks through his nose, exclaims, "Behold the abazid power of woobad!" and we all applaud tumultuously.

Seriously, she beats Van Amburgh. And I think the Duke of Wellington must have her painted by Landseer.

My penitent regards to Lady Blessington, Count D'Orsay, and my own Marchioness.[2]

Ever, dear Miss Power,
Very faithfully yours.

[1] Hans Christian Andersen.
[2] A younger sister of Miss Power.

CXVII. MISS HOGARTH

EDINBURGH, Thursday, December 13, 1847.

MY DEAR GEORGY, — I "take up my pen," as the young ladies write, to let you know how we are getting on; and as I shall be obliged to put it down again very soon, here goes. We lived with very hospitable people in a very splendid house near Glasgow, and were perfectly comfortable. The meeting was the most stupendous thing as to numbers, and the most beautiful as to colours and decorations I ever saw. The inimitable did wonders. His grace, elegance, and eloquence enchanted all beholders. *Kate did n't go!* having been taken ill on the railroad between here and Glasgow.

It has been snowing, sleeting, thawing, and freezing, sometimes by turns and sometimes all together, since the night before last. Lord Jeffrey's household are in town here, not at Craigcrook, and jogging on in a cosy, old-fashioned, comfortable sort of way. We have some idea of going to York on Sunday, passing that night at Alfred's, and coming home on Monday; but of this, Kate will advise you when she writes, which she will do to-morrow, after I shall have seen the list of railway trains.

She sends her best love. She is a little poorly still, but nothing to speak of. She is frightfully anxious that her not having been to the great demonstration should be kept a secret. But I say that, like murder, it will out, and that to hope to veil such a tremendous disgrace from the general intelligence is out of the question. In one of the Glasgow papers she is elaborately described. I rather think Miss Alison, who is seventeen, was taken for her, and sat for the portrait.

Best love from both of us, to Charley, Mamey, Katey, Wally, Chickenstalker, Skittles, and the Hoshen Peck; last, and not least, to you. We talked of you at the Macreadys' party on Monday night. I hope —— came out lively, also that —— was truly amiable. Finally that —— took everybody to their carriages, and that —— wept a good deal during the festivities? God bless you. Take care of yourself, for the sake of mankind in general.

Ever affectionately, dear Georgy.

CXVIII. EDITOR OF "THE SUN"

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, YORK GATE, REGENT'S PARK,
Friday, April 14, 1848.

Private.

Mr. Charles Dickens presents his compliments to the editor of "The Sun," and begs that gentleman will have the goodness to convey to the writer of the notice of "Dombey and Son," in last evening's paper, Mr. Dickens's warmest acknowledgments and thanks. The sympathy expressed in it is so very earnestly and unaffectedly stated, that it is particularly welcome and gratifying to Mr. Dickens, and he feels very desirous indeed to convey that assurance to the writer of that frank and genial farewell.

CXIX. WILLIAM CHARLES KENT[1]

1, DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, YORK GATE, REGENT'S PARK,
April 18, 1848.

DEAR SIR, — Pray let me repeat to you personally what I expressed in my former note, and allow me to assure you as an illustration of my sincerity that I have never addressed a similar communication to anybody except on one occasion.

Faithfully yours.

CXX. JOHN FORSTER

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, Saturday, April 22, 1848.

MY DEAR FORSTER, — I finished "Goldsmith" yesterday, after dinner, having read it from the first page to the last with the greatest care and attention.

As a picture of the time, I really think it impossible to give it too much praise. It seems to me to be the very essence of all about the time that I have ever seen in biography or fiction, presented in most wise and humane lights, and in a thousand new and just aspects. I have never liked Johnson half so well. body's contempt for Boswell ought to be capable of increase, have never seen him in my mind's eye half so plainly. roduction of him is quite a masterpiece. I should point

[1] The author of the notice in *The Sun*.

to that, if I did n't know the author, as being done by somebody with a remarkably vivid conception of what he narrated, and a most admirable and fanciful power of communicating it to another. All about Reynolds is charming; and the first account of the Literary Club and of Beauclerc as excellent a piece of description as ever I read in my life. But to read the book is to be in the time. It lives again in as fresh and lively a manner as if it were presented on an impossibly good stage by the very best actors that ever lived, or by the real actors come out of their graves on purpose.

And as to Goldsmith himself, and *his* life, and the tracing of it out in his own writings, and the manful and dignified assertion of him without any sobs, whines, or convulsions of any sort, it is throughout a noble achievement, of which, apart from any private and personal affection for you, I think (and really believe) I should feel proud, as one who had no indifferent perception of these books of his — to the best of my remembrance — when little more than a child. I was a little afraid in the beginning, when he committed those very discouraging imprudences, that you were going to champion him somewhat indiscriminately; but I very soon got over that fear, and found reason in every page to admire the sense, calmness, and moderation with which you make the love and admiration of the reader cluster about him from his youth, and strengthen with his strength — and weakness too, which is better still.

I don't quite agree with you in two small respects. First, I question very much whether it would have been a good thing for every great man to have had his Boswell, inasmuch as I think that two Boswells, or three at most, would have made great men extraordinarily false, and would have set them on always playing a part, and would have made distinguished people about them for ever restless and distrustful. I can imagine a succession of Boswells bringing about a tremendous state of falsehood in society, and playing the very devil with confidence and friendship. Secondly, I cannot help objecting to that practice (begun, I think, or greatly enlarged by Hunt) of italicising lines and words and whole passages in extracts, without some very special reason indeed. It does appear to be a kind of assertion of the editor over the reader — almost over the author himself — which grates upon me. The author might almost as well do it himself to my thinking, as a disagreeable

thing; and it is such a strong contrast to the modest, quiet, tranquil beauty of "The Deserted Village," for instance, that I would almost as soon hear "the town crier" speak the lines. The practice always reminds me of a man seeing a beautiful view, and not thinking how beautiful it is half so much as what he shall say about it.

In that picture at the close of the third book (a most beautiful one) of Goldsmith sitting looking out of window at the Temple trees, you speak of the "grey-eyed" rooks. Are you sure they are "grey-eyed"? The raven's eye is a deep lustrous black, and so, I suspect, is the rook's, except when the light shines full into it.

I have reserved for a closing word — though I *don't* mean to be eloquent about it, being far too much in earnest — the admirable manner in which the case of the literary man is stated throughout this book. It is splendid. I don't believe that any book was ever written, or anything ever done or said, half so conducive to the dignity and honour of literature as "The Life and Adventures of Oliver Goldsmith," by J. F., of the Inner Temple. The gratitude of every man who is content to rest his station and claims quietly on literature, and to make no feint of living by anything else, is your due for ever more. I have often said, here and there, when you have been at work upon the book, that I was sure it would be; and I shall insist on that debt being due to you (though there will be no need for insisting about it) as long as I have any tediousness and obstinacy to bestow on anybody. Lastly, I never will hear the biography compared with Boswell's except under vigorous protest. For I do say that it is mere folly to put into opposite scales a book, however amusing and curious, written by an unconscious coxcomb like that, and one which surveys and grandly understands the characters of all the illustrious company that move in it.

My dear Forster, I cannot sufficiently say how proud I am of what you have done, or how sensible I am of being so tenderly connected with it. When I look over this note, I feel as if I had said no part of what I think; and yet if I were to write another I should say no more, for I can't get it out. I desire no better for my fame, when my personal dustiness shall be past the control of my love of order, than such a biographer and such

And again I say, most solemnly, that literature in

England has never had, and probably never will have, such a champion as you are, in right of this book.

Ever affectionately.

CXXI. REV. JAMES WHITE

ATHEN.ÆUM, Thursday, May 4, 1848.

MY DEAR WHITE, — I have not been able to write to you until now. I have lived in hope that Kate and I might be able to run down to see you and yours for a day, before our design for enforcing the Government to make Knowles the first custodian of the Shakespeare house should come off.[1] But I am so perpetually engaged in drilling the forces that I see no hope of making a pleasant expedition to the Isle of Wight until about the twentieth. Then I shall hope to do so for one day. But of this I will advise you further, in due course.

My doubts about the house you speak of are twofold. First, I could not leave town so soon as May, having affairs to arrange for a sick sister. And secondly, I fear Bonchurch is not sufficiently bracing for my chickens, who thrive best in breezy and cool places. This has set me thinking, sometimes of the Yorkshire coast, sometimes of Dover. I would not have the house at Bonchurch reserved for me, therefore. But if it should be empty, we will go and look at it in a body.

I reserve the more serious part of my letter until the last, my dear White, because it comes from the bottom of my heart. None of your friends have thought and spoken oftener of you and Mrs. White than we have these many weeks past. I should have written to you, but was timid of intruding on your sorrow. What you say, and the manner in which you tell me I am connected with it in your recollection of your dear child, now among the angels of God, gives me courage to approach your grief — to say what sympathy we have felt with it, and how we have not been unimaginative of these deep sources of consolation to which you have had recourse. The traveller who journeyed in fancy from this world to the next was struck to the heart to find the child he had lost, many years before,

[1] The plan of buying the Shakespeare house at Stratford upon Avon and making the bankrupt Knowles custodian, by means of amateur theatricals, was abandoned when the town of Stratford assumed charge of the place. The money was given to Knowles.

building him a tower in heaven. Our blessed Christian hopes do not shut out the belief of love and remembrance still enduring there, but irradiate it and make it sacred. Who should know that better than you, or who more deeply feel the touching truths and comfort of that story in the older book, where, when the bereaved mother is asked, "Is it well with the child?" she answers, "It *is* well."

God be with you. Kate and her sister desire their kindest love to yourself and Mrs. White, in which I heartily join.

Being ever, my dear White,

Your affectionate friend.

CXXII. MRS. COWDEN CLARKE

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, Monday Evening, July 22, 1848.

MY DEAR MRS. CLARKE, — I have no energy whatever, I am very miserable. I loathe domestic hearths. I yearn to be a vagabond. Why can't I marry Mary?[1] Why have I seven children — not engaged at sixpence a night apiece, and dismissable for ever, if they tumble down, not taken on for an indefinite time at a vast expense, and never, — no never, never, — wearing lighted candles round their heads.[2] I am deeply miserable. A real house like this is insupportable, after that canvas farm wherein I was so happy. What is a humdrum dinner at half-past five, with nobody but John to see me eat it, compared with that soup, and the hundreds of pairs of eyes that watched its disappearance? Forgive this tear.[3] It is weak and foolish, I know.

Pray let me divide the little excursional expenses of the journey among the gentlemen, as I have always done before, and pray believe that I have had the sincerest pleasure and gratification in your co-operation and society, valuable and interesting on all public accounts, and personally of no mean worth, nor held in slight regard.

You had a sister once, when we were young and happy — I
[illegible]y called her Emma. If she remember a bright being
[illegible] flitted like a vision before her, entreat her to bestow a

[1] A character in [illegible].
[2] As fairies in Merry Wives.
[3] A huge blot of smeared ink.

a thought upon the "Gas" of departed joys. I can write no more.

Y. G.[1] THE (DARKENED) G. L. B.[2]

P. S. — "I am completely *blasé* — literally used up. I am dying for excitement. Is it possible that nobody can suggest anything to make my heart beat violently, my hair stand on end — but no!"

Where did I hear those words (so truly applicable to my forlorn condition) pronounced by some delightful creature? In a previous state of existence, I believe.

Oh, Memory, Memory!

Ever yours faithfully.

Y — no C. G — no D. C. D. I think it is — but I don't know — "there's nothing in it."

CXXIII. THE HON. MRS. WATSON

1, DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, REGENT'S PARK, July 27, 1848.

MY DEAR MRS. WATSON, — I thought to have been at Rockingham long ago! It seems a century since I, standing in big boots on the Haymarket stage, saw you come into a box up stairs and look down on the humbled Bobadil; since then I have had the kindest of notes from you, since then the finest of venison, and yet I have not seen the Rockingham flowers, and they are withering, I dare say.

But we have acted at Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham, Edinburgh, and Glasgow; and the business of all this — and graver and heavier daily occupation in going to see a dying sister at Hornsey — has so worried me that I have hardly had an hour, far less a week. I shall never be quite happy, in a theatrical point of view, until you have seen me play in an English version of the French piece, "L'Homme Blasé," which fairly turned the head of Glasgow last Thursday night as ever was; neither shall I be quite happy, in a social point of view, until I have been to Rockingham again. When the first event will come about, Heaven knows. The latter will happen about the end of the November fogs and wet weather. For am I not going to Broadstairs now, to walk about on the seashore (why

[1] "Young Gas."
[2] "Gas-Light boy." } Names he had playfully given himself.

don't you bring your rosy children there?) and think what is to be done for Christmas! An idea occurs to me all at once. I must come down and read you that book before it's published. Shall it be a bargain? Were you all in Switzerland? I don't believe *I* ever was. It is such a dream now. I wonder sometimes whether I ever disputed with a Haldimand; whether I ever drank mulled wine on the top of the Great St. Bernard, or was jovial at the bottom with company that have stolen into my affection; whether I ever was merry and happy in that valley on the Lake of Geneva, or saw you one evening (when I did n't know you) walking down among the green trees outside Elysée, arm in arm with a gentleman in a white hat. I am quite clear that there is no foundation for these visions. But I should like to go somewhere, too, and try it all over again. I don't know how it is, but the ideal world in which my lot is cast has an odd effect on the real one, and makes it chiefly precious for such remembrances. I get quite melancholy over them sometimes, especially when, as now, those great piled-up semi-circles of bright faces, at which I have lately been looking — all laughing, earnest and intent — have faded away like dead people. They seem a ghostly moral of everything in life to me.

Kate sends her best love, in which Georgy would as heartily unite, I know, but that she is already gone to Broadstairs with the children. We think of following on Saturday morning, but that depends on my poor sister.[1] Pray give my most cordial remembrances to Watson, and tell him they include a great deal. I meant to have written you a letter. I don't know what this is. There is no word for it. So, if you will still let me owe you one, I will pay my debt, on the smallest encouragement, from the seaside. Here, there, and elsewhere, I am, with perfect truth, believe me,

Very faithfully yours.

CXXIV. W. C. MACREADY

BROADSTAIRS, KENT, Saturday, August 26, 1848.

MY DEAR MACREADY, — I was about to write to you when I received your welcome letter. You knew I should come from a somewhat longer distance than this to give you a hearty God-

[1] Fanny Burnett, who died this summer.

speed and farewell on the eve of your journey.[1] What do you say to Monday, the fourth, or Saturday, the second? Fix either day, let me know which suits you best — at what hour you expect the Inimitable, and the Inimitable will come up to the scratch like a man and a brother.

Permit me, in conclusion, to nail my colours to the mast. Stars and stripes are so-so — showy, perhaps; but my colours is THE UNION JACK, which I am told has the remarkable property of having braved a thousand years the battle AND the breeze. Likewise, it is the flag of Albion — the standard of Britain; and Britons, as I am informed, never, never, never — will — be — slaves!

My sentiment is: Success to the United States as a golden campaigning ground, but blow the United States to 'tarnal smash as an Englishman's place of residence. Gentlemen, are you all charged?

Affectionately ever.

CXXV. FRANK STONE

BEDFORD HOTEL, BRIGHTON, Monday Night, November 27, 1848.

MY DEAR STONE, — You are a TRUMP, emphatically a TRUMP, and such are my feelings towards you at this moment that I think (but I am not sure) that if I saw you about to place a card on a wrong pack at Bibeck (?), I would n't breathe a word of objection.

Sir, there is a subject I have written to-day for the third part, that I think and hope will just suit you. Scene, Tetterby's. Time, morning. The power of bringing back people's memories of sorrow, wrong, and trouble, has been given by the ghost to Milly, though she don't know it herself. As she comes along the street, Mr. and Mrs. Tetterby recover themselves, and are mutually affectionate again, and embrace, closing *rather* a good scene of quarrel and discontent. The moment they do so, Johnny (who has seen her in the distance and announced her before, from which moment they begin to recover) cries "Here she is!" and she comes in, surrounded by the little Tetterbys, the very spirit of morning, gladness, innocence, hope, love, domesticity, etc., etc., etc., etc.

I would limit the illustration to her and the children, which

[1] Macready was on the eve of a journey to America.

will make a fitness between it and your other illustrations, and give them all a character of their own. The exact words of the passage I indorsed on another slip of paper. Note. There are six boy Tetterbys present (young 'Dolphus is not there), including Johnny; and in Johnny's arms is Moloch, the baby, who is a girl. I hope to be back in town next Monday, and will lose no time in reporting myself to you. Don't wait to send me the drawing of this. I know how pretty she will be with the children in your hands, and should be a stupendous jackass if I had any distrust of it.

The Duke of Cambridge is staying in this house, and they are driving me mad by having Life Guards bands under our windows, playing *our* overtures! I have been at work all day, and am going to wander into the theatre, where (for the comic man's benefit) "two gentlemen of Brighton" are performing two counts in a melodrama. I was quite addle-headed for the time being, and think an amateur or so would revive me. No 'Tone! I don't in the abstract approve of Brighton. I could n't pass an autumn here; but it is a gay place for a week or so; and when one laughs and cries, and suffers the agitation that some men experience over their books, it 's a bright change to look out of window, and see the gilt little toys on horseback going up and down before the mighty sea, and thinking nothing of it. Kate's love and Georgy's. They say you 'll contradict every word of this letter. Faithfully ever.

[SLIP OF PAPER INCLOSED]

"Hurrah! here 's Mrs. Williams!" cried Johnny.

So she was, and all the Tetterby children with her; and as she came in, they kissed her and kissed one another, and kissed the baby and kissed their father and mother, and then ran back and flocked and danced about her, trooping on with her in triumph.

(After which, she is going to say: "What, are *you* all glad to see me too! Oh, how happy it makes me to find every one so glad to see me this bright morning!")

CXXVI. MARK LEMON

BEDFORD HOTEL, BRIGHTON, November 28, 1848.

MY DEAR MARK, — I assure you, most unaffectedly and cordially, that the dedication of that book to Mary and *Kate* (not Catherine) will be a real delight to me, and to all of us. I know well that you propose it in "affectionate regard," and value and esteem it, therefore, in a way not easy of expression.

You were talking of "coming" down, and now, in a mean and dodging way, you write about "sending" the second act! I have a propogician to make. Come down on Friday. There is a train leaves London Bridge at two — gets here at four. By that time I shall be ready to strike work. We can take a little walk, dine, discuss, and you can go back in good time next morning. I really think this ought to be done, and indeed MUST be done. Write and say it shall be done.

A little management will be required in dramatising the third part, where there are some things I *describe* (for effect's sake, and as a matter of art) which must be *said* on the stage. Redlaw is in a new condition of mind, which fact must be shot point-blank at the audience, I suppose, "as from the deadly level of a gun." By anybody who knew how to play Milly, I think it might be made very good. Its effect is very pleasant upon me. I have also given Mr. and Mrs. Tetterby another innings.

I went to the play last night — fifth act of "Richard the Third." Richmond by a stout *lady*, with a particularly well-developed bust, who finished all the speeches with the soubrette simper. Also at the end of the tragedy she came forward (still being Richmond) and said, "Ladies and gentlemen, on Wednesday next the entertainments will be for *My* benefit, when I hope to meet your approbation and support." Then, having bowed herself into the stage door, she looked out of it and said, winningly, "Won't you come?" which was enormously applauded.

Ever affectionately.

CXXVII. MISS DICKENS

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, Tuesday Night, February 27, 1849.

MY DEAREST MAMEY, — I am not engaged on the evening of your birthday. But even if I had an engagement of the most particular kind, I should excuse myself from keeping it, so that I might have the pleasure of celebrating at home, and among my children, the day that gave me such a dear and good daughter as you. Ever affectionately yours.

CXXVIII. MRS. CHARLES DICKENS

SHANKLIN, ISLE OF WIGHT, Monday Night, June 16, 1849.

MY DEAR KATE, — I have but a moment. Just got back and post going out. I have taken a most delightful and beautiful house, belonging to White,[1] at Bonchurch; cool, airy, private bathing, everything delicious. I think it is the prettiest place I ever saw in my life, at home or abroad. Anne may begin to dismantle Devonshire Terrace. I have arranged for carriages, luggage, and everything.

The man with the post-bag is swearing in the passage.

Ever affectionately.

P. S. — A waterfall on the grounds, which I have arranged with a carpenter to convert into a perpetual shower-bath.

CXXIX. MARK LEMON

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, Monday, June 25, 1849.

MY DEAR LEMON, — I am very unwilling to deny Charley the pleasure you so kindly offer him. But as it is just the close of the half-year when they are getting together all the half-year's work — and as that day's pleasure would weaken the next day's duty, I think I must be "more like an ancient Roman than a ——" Sparkler, and that it will be wisest in me to say nothing about it.

Get a clean pocket-handkerchief ready for the close of "Copperfield" No. 3; "simple and quiet, but very natural and touching." — *Evening Bore.* Ever affectionately.

[1] Rev. James White, one of Dickens's favourite correspondents.

NEW SONG

TUNE — "Leabia hath a beaming eye."

I

Lemon is a little hipped,
And this is Lemon's true position;
He is not pale, he 's not white-lipped,
Yet wants a little fresh condition.
Sweeter 't is to gaze upon
Old ocean's rising, falling billows,
Than on the houses every one,
That form the street called Saint Anne's Willers.
Oh, my Lemon, round and fat,
Oh, my bright, my right, my tight 'un,
Think a little what you 're at —
Don't stay at home, but come to Brighton!

II

Lemon has a coat of frieze,
But all so seldom Lemon wears it,
That it is a prey to fleas,
And ev'ry moth that 's hungry tears it.
Oh, that coat 's the coat for me,
That braves the railway sparks and breezes,
Leaving every engine free
To smoke it, till its owner sneezes!
Then, my Lemon, round and fat,
L., my bright, my right, my tight 'un,
Think a little what you 're at —
On Tuesday first, come down to Brighton!

T. SPARKLER.

Also signed,
CATHERINE DICKENS,
ANNIE LEECH,
GEORGINA HOGARTH,
MARY DICKENS,
KATIE DICKENS,
JOHN LEECH.

CXXX. REV. JAMES WHITE

WINTERBOURNE, Sunday Evening, September 23, 1849.

MY DEAR WHITE, — I have a hundred times at least wanted to say to you how good I thought those papers in "Blackwood" — how excellent their purpose, and how delicately and charmingly worked out. Their subtle and delightful humour, and their grasp of the whole question, were something more pleasant to me than I can possibly express.

"How comes this blundering Immutable to say this, on this Sunday night of all nights in the year?" you naturally ask. Now hear the Immutable's honest avowal." I make [illegible] because I heard that Morning Service better read this morning than ever I have heard it read in my life. And because [illegible] for the [illegible] of [illegible] I cannot separate the two things, or keep identifying the wise and genial man [illegible] of [illegible] with the earnest and [illegible] man in it. My manner is a strange perhaps, but a manly old hope that will hold us true friends for many and many a year to come. The madness is over as soon as you have burned this letter, or the history of the Gunpowder Plot; but let us be friends much longer for these reasons and many included in them not herein expressed.

Affectionately always.

[illegible] JOSEPH C. KING.[1]

Devonshire Terrace, Saturday, December [illegible], 18[illegible].

My dear Sir, — I hasten to let you know what took place at [illegible] to-day. I [illegible] that I [illegible] Mr. [illegible] [illegible] that I [illegible] [illegible] after seeing Mr. [illegible] [illegible] was [illegible] Mr. [illegible] and Mr. [illegible] [illegible] I [illegible] the latter [illegible] preference [illegible] the [illegible] I [illegible] greater [illegible] I [illegible] to have Mr. [illegible] boarder with Mr. [illegible] [illegible] this arrangement [illegible] Mr. H[illegible] [illegible]

Mr. [illegible] [illegible] Mr. [illegible] [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] H[illegible]

[1] [illegible] Dickens, Jr.

appeared most interested and pleased, and filled me with a grateful feeling towards you, to whom Charley owes so much.

He said there were certain verses in imitation of Horace (I really forget what sort of verses) to which Charley was unaccustomed, and which were a little matter enough in themselves, but were made a great point of at Eton, and could be got up well in a month "*from an old Etonian.*" For this purpose he would desire Charley to be sent every day to a certain Mr. Hardisty, in Store Street, Bedford Square, to whom he had already (in my absence) prepared a note. Between ourselves, I must not hesitate to tell you plainly that this appeared to me to be a conventional way of bestowing a little patronage. But, of course, I had nothing for it but to say it should be done; upon which, Mr. Cookesley added that he was then certain that Charley, on coming after the Christmas holidays, would be placed at once in "the remove," which seemed to surprise Mr. Evans when I afterwards told him of it as a high station.

I will take him to this gentleman on Monday, and arrange for his going there every day; but if you will not object, I should still like him to remain with you, and to have the advantage of preparing these amazing verses under your eye until the holidays. That Mr. Cookesley may have his own way thoroughly, I will send Charley to Mr. Hardisty daily until the school at Eton recommences.

Let me impress upon you in the strongest manner, not only that I was inexpressibly delighted myself by the readiness with which Charley went through this ordeal with a stranger, but that I also saw you would have been well pleased and much gratified if you could have seen Mr. Cookesley afterwards. He had evidently not expected such a result, and took it as not at all an ordinary one.

My dear sir, yours faithfully and obliged.

CXXXII. M. DE CERJAT

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, Saturday, December 29, 1849.

MY DEAR CERJAT, — I received your letter at breakfast-time this morning with a pleasure my eloquence is unable to express and your modesty unable to conceive. It is so delightful to be remembered at this time of the year in your house where we have been so happy, and in dear old Lausanne, that

we always hope to see again, that I can't help pushing away the first page of "Copperfield" No. 10, now staring at me with what I may literally call a blank aspect, and plunging energetically into this reply.

What a strange coincidence that is about Blunderstone House! Of all the odd things I have ever heard (and their name is Legion), I think it is the oddest. I went down into that part of the country on the 7th of January last year, when I was meditating the story, and chose Blunderstone for the sound of its name. I had previously observed much of what you say about the poor girls. In all you suggest with so much feeling about their return to virtue being cruelly cut off, I concur with a sore heart. I have been turning it over in my mind for some time, and hope, in the history of Little Em'ly (who *must* fall — there is no hope for her), to put it before the thoughts of people in a new and pathetic way, and perhaps to do some good. You will be glad to hear, I know, that "Copperfield" is a great success. I think it is better liked than any of my other books.

We had a most delightful time at Watsons' (for both of them we have preserved and strengthened a real affection), and were the gayest of the gay. There was a Miss Boyle staying in the house, who is an excellent amateur actress, and she and I got up some scenes from "The School for Scandal" and from "Nickleby," with immense success. We played in the old hall, with the audience filled up and running over with servants. The entertainments concluded with feats of legerdemain (for the performance of which I have a pretty good apparatus, collected at divers times and in divers places), and we then fell to country dances of a most frantic description, and danced all night. We often spoke of you and Mrs. Cerjat and of Haldimand, and wished you were all there. Watson and I have some fifty times "registered a vow" (like O'Connell) to come to Lausanne together, and have even settled in what month and week. Something or other has always interposed to prevent us; but I hope, please God, most certainly to see it again, when my labours Copperfieldian shall have terminated.

You have no idea what that hanging of the Mannings really was. The conduct of the people was so indescribably frightful, that I felt for some time afterwards almost as if I were living in a city of devils. I feel, at this hour, as if I never could go

near the place again. My letters have made a great to-do, and led to a great agitation of the subject; but I have not a confident belief in any change being made, mainly because the total abolitionists are utterly reckless and dishonest (generally speaking), and would play the deuce with any such proposition in Parliament, unless it were strongly supported by the Government, which it would certainly not be, the Whig motto (in office) being "*laissez aller*." I think Peel might do it if he came in. Two points have occurred to me as being a good commentary to the objections to my idea. The first is that a most terrific uproar was made when the hanging processions were abolished, and the ceremony shrunk from Tyburn to the prison door. The second is that, at this very time, under the British Government in New South Wales, executions take place *within the prison walls*, with decidedly improved results (I am waiting to explode this fact on the first man of mark who gives me the opportunity.)

Unlike you, we have had no marriages or giving in marriage here. We might have had, but a certain young lady, whom you know, is hard to please. The children are all well, thank God! Charley is going to Eton the week after next, and has passed a first-rate examination. Kate is quite well, and unites with me and Georgina in love to you and Mrs. Cerjat and Haldimand, whom I would give a good deal (tell him) to have several hours' contradiction of at his own table. Good heavens, how obstinate we would both be! I see him leaning back in his chair, with his right forefinger out, and saying, "Good God!" in reply to some proposition of mine, and then laughing.

All in a moment a feeling comes over me, as if you and I have been still talking, smoking cigars outside the inn at Martigny, the piano sounding inside, and Lady Mary Taylour singing. I look into my garden (which is covered with snow) rather dolefully, but take heart again, and look brightly forward to another expedition to the Great St. Bernard, when Mrs. Cerjat and I shall laugh as I fancy I have never laughed since, in one of those one-sided cars; and when we shall again learn from Haldimand, in a little dingy cabaret, at lunch-time, how to secure a door in travelling (do you remember?) by balancing a chair against it on its two hind legs.

I do hope that we may all come together again once more,

while there is a head of hair left among us; and in this hope remain, my dear Cerjat,

Your faithful friend.

CXXXIII. JAMES SHERIDAN KNOWLES

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, January 2, 1850.

MY DEAR GOOD KNOWLES, — Many happy New Years to you, and to all who are near and dear to you. Your generous heart unconsciously exaggerates, I am sure, my merit in respect of that most honourable gentleman who has been the occasion of our recent correspondence. I cannot sufficiently admire the dignity of his conduct, and I really feel indebted to you for giving me the gratification of observing it.

As to that "cross note," which, rightly considered, was nothing of the sort, if ever you refer to it again, I 'll do — I don't exactly know what, but something perfectly desperate and ferocious. If I have ever thought of it, it has only been to remember with delight how soon we came to a better understanding, and how heartily we confirmed it with a most expressive shake of the hand, one evening down in that mouldy little den of Miss Kelly's.

Heartily and faithfully yours.

"Daddy" Knowles.

CXXXIV. MRS. GASKELL

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, January 31, 1850.

MY DEAR MRS. GASKELL, — You may perhaps have seen an announcement in the papers of my intention to start a new cheap weekly journal of general literature.

I do not know what your literary vows of temperance or abstinence may be, but as I do honestly know that there is no living English writer whose aid I would desire to enlist in preference to the authoress of "Mary Barton" (a book that most profoundly affected and impressed me), I venture to ask you whether you can give me any hope that you will write a short tale, or any number of tales, for the projected pages.

No writer's name will be used, neither my own nor any other; every paper will be published without any signature, and all will seem to express the general mind and purpose of

the journal, which is the raising up of those that are down, and the general improvement of our social condition. I should set a value on your help which your modesty can hardly imagine; and I am perfectly sure that the least result of your reflection or observation in respect of the life around you, would attract attention and do good.

Of course I regard your time as valuable, and consider it so when I ask you if you could devote any of it to this purpose.

If you could and would prefer to speak to me on the subject, I should be very glad indeed to come to Manchester for a few hours and explain anything you might wish to know. My unaffected and great admiration of your book makes me very earnest in all relating to you. Forgive my troubling you for this reason, and believe me ever,

Faithfully yours.

P. S. — Mrs. Dickens and her sister send their love.

CXXXV. REV. JAMES WHITE

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, Tuesday, February 5, 1850.

MY DEAR WHITE, — I have been going to write to you for a long time, but have always had in my mind that you might come here with Lotty any day. As Lotty has come without you, however, (witness a tremendous rampaging and ravaging now going on up stairs!) I despatch this note to say that I suppose you have seen the announcement of "the" new weekly thing, and that if you would ever write anything for it you would please me better than I can tell you. We hope to do some solid good, and we mean to be as cheery and pleasant as we can. (And, putting our hands in our breeches pockets, we say complacently, that our money is as good as "Blackwood's" any day in the week.)

Now the murder 's out!

Are you never coming to town any more? Must I come to Bonchurch? Am I born (for the eight-and-thirtieth time) next Thursday, at half-past five, and do you mean to say you are *not* coming to dinner? Well, well, I can always go over to Puseyism to spite my friends, and that 's some comfort.

Poor dear Jeffrey! I had heard from him but a few days, and the unopened proof of No. 10 was lying on his table when

he died. I believe I have lost as affectionate a friend as I ever had, or ever shall have, in this world.

Ever heartily yours, my dear White.

CXXXVI. W. H. WILLS[1]

148, KING'S ROAD, BRIGHTON, Tuesday Night, March 12, 1850.

MY DEAR WILLS, — I have made a correction or two in my part of the post-office article. I still observe the top-heavy "Household Words" in the title. The title of "The Amusements of the People" has to be altered as I have marked it. I would as soon have my hair cut off as an intolerable Scotch shortness put into my titles by the elision of little words. "The Seasons" wants a little punctuation. Will the "Incident in the life of Mademoiselle Clairon" go into those two pages? I fear not, but one article would be infinitely better, I am quite certain, than two or three short ones. If it will go in, in with it.

I shall be back, please God, by dinner-time to-morrow week. I will be ready for Smithfield either on the following Monday morning at four, or any other morning you may arrange for.

Would it do to make up No. 2 on Wednesday, the 20th, instead of Saturday? If so, it would be an immense convenience to me. But if it be distinctly necessary to make it up on Saturday, say by return, and I am to be relied upon. Don't fail in this.

I really *can't* promise to be comic. Indeed, your note put me out a little, for I had just sat down to begin, "It will last my time." I will shake my head a little, and see if I can shake a more comic substitute out of it.

As to *two* comic articles, or two any sort of articles, out of me, that 's the intensest extreme of no-goism.

Ever faithfully.

CXXXVII. MRS. CHARLES DICKENS

BROADSTAIRS, Tuesday, September 3, 1850.

MY DEAREST KATE, — I inclose a few lines from Georgy, and write these to say that I purpose going home at some time on Thursday, but I cannot say precisely when, as it depends on

[1] Dickens's right-hand man on *Household Words*.

what work I do to-morrow. Yesterday Charles Knight, White, Forster, Charley, and I walked to Richborough Castle and back. Knight dined with us afterwards; and the Whites, the Bicknells, and Mrs. Gibson came in in the evening and played vingt-et-un.

Having no news I must tell you a story of Sydney. The children, Georgy, and I were out in the garden on Sunday evening (by the bye, I made a beautiful passage down, and got to Margate a few minutes after one), when I asked Sydney if he would go to the railroad and see if Forster was coming. As he answered very boldly "Yes," I opened the garden gate, upon which he set off alone as fast as his legs would carry him; and being pursued, was not overtaken until he was through the Lawn House Archway, when he was still going on at full speed — I can't conceive where. Being brought back in triumph, he made a number of fictitious starts, for the sake of being overtaken again, and we made a regular game of it. At last, when he and Ally had run away, instead of running after them, we came into the garden, shut the gate, and crouched down on the ground. Presently we heard them come back and say to each other with some alarm, "Why, the gate 's shut, and they 're all gone!" Ally began in a dismayed way to cry out, but the Phenomenon shouting, "Open the gate!" sent an enormous stone flying into the garden (among our heads) by way of alarming the establishment. I thought it a wonderful piece of character, showing great readiness of resource. He would have fired a perfect battery of stones, or very likely have broken the pantry window, I think, if we had n't let him in.

They are all in great force, and send their loves. They are all much excited with the expectation of receiving you on Friday, and would start me off to fetch you now if I would go.

Our train on Friday will be half-past twelve. I have spoken to Georgy about the partridges, and hope we may find some.

Ever, my dearest Kate,

Most affectionately.

CXXXVIII. THE HON. MRS. WATSON

BROADSTAIRS, KENT, September 24, 1850.

MY DEAR MRS. WATSON, — Coming out of "Copperfield" into a condition of temporary and partial consciousness, I plunge into histrionic duties, and hold enormous correspondence with Miss Boyle, between whom and myself the most portentous packets are continually passing. I send you a piece we purpose playing last at Rockingham, which "my company" played in London, Scotland, Manchester, Liverpool, and I don't know where else. It is one of the most ridiculous things ever done. We purpose, as I have said, playing it last. Why do I send it to you? Because there is an excellent part (played in my troupe by George Cruikshank) for your brother in it — Jeffrey; with a black patch on his eye, and a lame leg, he would be charming — noble! If he is come home, give him my love and tell him so. If he is not come home, do me that favour when he does come. And add that I have a wig for him belonging to the part, which I have an idea of sending to the Exposition of '51, as a triumph of human ingenuity.

I am the Doctor; Miss Boyle, Lisette; Georgy, the other little woman. We have nearly arranged our "bill" for Rockingham. We shall want one more reasonably good actor, besides your brother and Miss Boyle's, to play the Marquis in this piece. Do you know a being endowed by nature with the requisite qualities?

There are some things in the next "Copperfield" that I think better than any that have gone before. After I have been believing such things with all my heart and soul, two results always ensue: first, I can't write plainly to the eye; secondly, I can't write sensibly to the mind. So "Copperfield" is to blame, and I am not, for this wandering note; and if you like it, you'll forgive me. With my affectionate remembrances to Watson,

Ever, my dear Mrs. Watson,
Very faithfully yours.

P. S. — I find I am not equal to the flourish.

CXXXIX. WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR

OFFICE OF "HOUSEHOLD WORDS," Wednesday, December 4, 1850.

MY DEAR LANDOR, — I have been (a strange thing for me) so very unwell since Sunday, that I have hardly been able to hold up my head — a bilious attack, I believe, and a very miserable sort of business. This, my dear friend, is the reason why I have not sooner written to you in reference to your noble letter, which I read in "The Examiner," and for which — as it exalts me — I cannot, cannot thank you in words.

We had been following up the blow in Kinkel's [1] favour, and I was growing sanguine, in the hope of getting him out (having enlisted strong and active sympathy in his behalf), when the news came of his escape. Since then we have heard nothing of him. I rather incline to the opinion that the damnable powers that be connived at his escape, but know nothing. Whether he be retaken or whether he appear (as I am not without hope he may) in the streets of London, I shall be a party to no step whatever without consulting you; and if any scrap of intelligence concerning him shall reach me, it shall be yours immediately.

Horne wrote the article. I shall see him here to-night, and know how he will feel your sympathy and support. But I do not wait to see him before writing, lest you should think me slow to feel your generosity. We said at home when we read your letter, that it was like the opening of your whole munificent and bare heart.

Ever most affectionately yours,
My dear Landor.

CXL. THE HON. MRS. WATSON

THIS IS No. 2.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, Monday Morning, December 9, 1850.

MY DEAR MRS. WATSON, — Your note to me of Saturday has crossed mine to you, I find. If you open both of mine together, please to observe *this is No. 2.*

[1] Dr. Gottfried Kinkel, a distinguished scholar and Professor in the University of Bonn, who was at that time undergoing very rigorous State imprisonment in Prussia, for political reasons.

You may rely on Mr. Tucker's doing his work thoroughly well and charging a fair price. It is not possible for him to say aforehand, in such a case, what it will cost, I imagine, as he will have to adapt his work to the place. Nathan's stage knowledge may be stated in the following figures: 00000000000. Therefore, I think you had best refer Mr. Tucker to *me*, and I will apply all needful screws and tortures to him.

I have thought of one or two very ingenious (hem !) little contrivances for adapting the difficulties of "Used Up" to the small stage. They will require to be so exactly explained to your carpenter (though very easy little things in themselves), that I think I had better, before Christmas, send my servant down for an hour — he is quite an old stager now — to show him precisely what I mean. It is not a day's work, but it would be extremely difficult to explain in writing. I developed these wonderful ideas to the master carpenter at one of the theatres, and he shook his head with an intensely mournful air, and said, "Ah, sir, it's a universal observation in the profession, sir, that it was a great loss to the public when you took to writing books!" which I thought complimentary to "Copperfield."

Ever faithfully yours.

CXLI. THE HON. MRS. WATSON

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, Saturday, December 14, 1850.

MY DEAR MRS. WATSON, — I shall be delighted to come on the seventh instead of the eighth. We consider it an engagement. Over and above the pleasure of a quiet day with you, I think I can greatly facilitate the preparations (that's the way, you see, in which we cheat ourselves into making duties of pleasures) by being at Rockingham a day earlier. So that 's settled.

I was quite certain when that Child of Israel mentioned those dimensions, that he must be wrong. For which woodenheadedness the Child shall be taken to task on Monday morning, when I am going to look at his preparations, by appointment, about the door. Don't you observe, that the scenery not being made expressly for the room, it may be impossible to use it as you propose? There is a scene before that wall, and unless the door in the scene (supposing there to be one, which

I am not sure of) should come exactly into the place of the door of the room, the door of the room might as well be in Africa. If it could be used it would still require to be backed (excuse professional technicality) by another scene in the passage. And if it be rather in the side of the bottom of the room (as I seem to remember it), it would be shut out of sight, or partially, by the side scenes. Do you comprehend these stage-managerial sagacities? That piece of additional room in so small a stage would be of immense service, if we could avail ourselves of it. If we can't, I have another means (I think) of discovering Leech, Saville, and Coldstream at table. I am constantly turning over in my mind the capacities of the place, and hope by one means or other to make something more than the best of it. As to the fireplace, you will never be able to use that. The heat of the lamp will be very great, and ventilation will be the thing wanted. Thirteen feet and a half of depth, diminished by stage fittings and furniture, is a small space. I think the doorway could be used in the last scene, with the castle steps and platform for the staircase running straight through it towards the hall. *Nous verrons.* I will write again about my visit of inspection, probably on Monday.

Will you let them know that Messrs. Nathan, of Titchborne Street, Haymarket, will dress them, please, and that I will engage for their doing it thoroughly well; also that Mr. Wilson, theatrical hairdresser, Strand, near St. Clement's Churchyard, will come down with wigs, etc., to "make up" everybody; that he has a list of the pieces from me, and that he will be glad to measure the heads and consult the tastes of all concerned, if they will give him the opportunity beforehand? I should like to see Sir Adonis Leech and the Hon. T. Saville if I can. For they ought to be wonderfully made up, and to be as unlike themselves as possible, and to contrast well with each other and with me. I rather grudge *caro sposo* coming into the company. I should like him so much to see the play. If we do it all well together it ought to be so very pleasant. I never saw a great mass of people so charmed with a little story as when we acted it at the Glasgow Theatre. But I have no other reason for faltering when I take him to my arms. I feel that he is the man for the part.[1] I see him with a blue bag, a flaxen wig, and green spectacles. I know what it will be. I foresee how

[1] The part of the lawyer in *Used Up*.

all that sessional experience will come out. I reconcile myself to it, in spite of the selfish consideration of wanting him elsewhere; and while I have a heavy sense of a light being snuffed out in the audience, perceive a new luminary shining on the stage!

Your brother[1] would make a capital tiger, too! Very short tight surtout, doeskins, bright top-boots, white cravat, bouquet in button-hole, close wig — very good, ve—ry good. It clearly must be so. The thing is done. I told you we were opening a tremendous correspondence when we first began to write on such a long subject. But do let me tell you, once and for all, that I am in the business heart and soul, and that you cannot trouble me respecting it, and that I would n't willingly or knowingly leave the minutest detail unprovided for. It cannot possibly be a success if the smallest peppercorn of arrangement be omitted. And a success it must be! I could n't go into such a thing, or help to bring you poorly out of it, for any earthly consideration. Talking of forgetting, is n't it odd? I doubt if I could forget words I had learned, so long as I wanted them. But the moment the necessity goes, they go. I know my place and everybody's place in this identical piece of "Used Up" perfectly, and could put every little object on its own square inches of room exactly where it ought to be. But I have no more recollection of my words now (I took the book up yesterday) than if I had only seen the play as one of the audience at a theatre. Perhaps not so much. With cordial remembrances,

Ever, dear Mrs. Watson,
Faithfully yours.

CXLII. THE HON. MRS. WATSON

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE. Monday Morning, December 30, 1850.

MY DEAR MRS. WATSON, — As your letter is *decided*, the scaffolding shall be re-erected round Charley's locks: it has been taken down, and the workmen had retired to their respective homes in various parts of England and Wales, and his dressing proceeded with. I have been very much pleased with him in the matter, as he has never made the least demonstration of disappointment or mortification, and was perfectly contented to

[1] This part, finally, was played by Charles Dickens, Jr.

give in. (*Here I break off to go to Boxall.*) (*Here I return much exhausted.*)

Your time shall be stated in the bills for both nights. I propose to rehearse on the day, on Thursday and Friday, and in the evening on Saturday, that we may try our lights. Therefore: —

NATHAN and STAGE CARPENTER	will come on Tuesday, 7th January, as there must be a responsible person to anathematise, and as the company seem so slow about their dresses, that I foresee the strong probability of Nathan having a good deal to do at Rockingham without respect.
WILSON	will come on Saturday, 11th January.
TUCKER	will come on Saturday, 11th January.

I shall be delighted to see your brother, and so no more at present from Yours ever,

COLDSTREAM FREELOVE DOCTOR DICKENS.

P. S. — As Boxall (with his head very much on one side and his spectacles on) danced backward from the canvas incessantly with great nimbleness, and returned and made little digs at it with his pencil, with a horrible grin on his countenance, I augur that he pleased himself this morning.

("Tag" added by Mr. Dickens to "Animal Magnetism," played at Rockingham Castle.)

ANIMAL MAGNETISM. — TAG.

[After LA FLEUR says to the MARQUIS: "Sir, return him the wand; and the ladies, I dare say, will fall in love with him again."]

DOCTOR. I'm cheated, robbed! I don't believe! I hate
Wand, Marquis, Doctor, Ward, Lisette, and Fate!
LA FLEUR. Not me?
DOCTOR. *You* worse, you rascal, than the rest.
LA FLEUR (*bowing*). To merit it, good sir, I've done my best.
LISETTE (*sharply*). And I.
CONSTANCE. I fear that I too have a claim
Upon your anger.
LISETTE. Anger, madam? Shame!
He's justly treated, as he might have known.
And if the wand were a divining one
It would have turn'd, within his very hands,
Point-blank to where your handsome husband stands.
CONSTANCE (*glancing at* DOCTOR). I would it were the wand of Harlequin,
To change his temper and his favour win.

JEFFREY (*peeping in*). In that case, mistress, you might be so kind
As waive me back the eye of which I'm blind.
MARQUIS (*laughing and examining it*). 'T is nothing but a piece of senseless wood,
And has no influence for harm or good.
Yet stay! It surely draws me towards those
Indulgent, pleasant, smiling, beaming rows!
It surely charms me.
ALL. And us too.
MARQUIS. To bend
Before their gen'rous efforts to commend;
To cheer us on, through these few happy hours,
And strew our mimic way with real flowers.
[*All make obeisance.*
Stay yet again. Among us all, I feel
One subtle, all-pervading influence steal,
Stirring one wish within one heart and head,
Bright be the path our host and hostess tread!
Blest be their children, happy be their race,
Long may they live, this ancient hall to grace,
Long bear of English virtues noble fruit —
Green-hearted ROCKINGHAM! strike deep thy root.

CXLIII. MISS MARY BOYLE

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, Friday Night, late, February 21, 1851.

MY DEAR MISS BOYLE, — I have devoted a couple of hours this evening to going very carefully over your paper (which I had read before) and to endeavouring to bring it closer, and to lighten it, and to give it that sort of compactness which a habit of composition, and of disciplining one's thoughts like a regiment, and of studying the art of putting each soldier into his right place, may have gradually taught me to think necessary. I hope, when you see it in print, you will not be alarmed by my use of the pruning-knife. I have tried to exercise it with the utmost delicacy and discretion, and to suggest to you, especially towards the end, how this sort of writing (regard being had to the size of the journal in which it appears) requires to be compressed, and is made pleasanter by compression. This all reads very solemnly, but only because I want you to read it (I mean the article) with as loving an eye as I have truly tried to touch it with a loving and gentle hand. I propose to call it "My Mahogany Friend." The other name is too long, and I think not attractive. Until I go to the office to-morrow and see what is actually in hand, I am not certain of the number in which it will appear, but Georgy shall write on

Monday and tell you. We are always a fortnight in advance of the public, or the mechanical work could not be done. I think there are many things in it that are *very pretty*. The Katie part is particularly well done. If I don't say more, it is because I have a heavy sense, in all cases, of the responsibility of encouraging any one to enter on that thorny track, where the prizes are so few and the blanks so many; where —

But I won't write you a sermon. With the fire going out, and the first shadows of a new story hovering in a ghostly way about me (as they usually begin to do, when I have finished an old one), I am in danger of doing the heavy business, and becoming a heavy guardian, or something of that sort, instead of the light and airy Joe.

So good night, and believe that you may always trust me, and never find a grim expression (towards you) in any that I wear.

Ever yours.

CXLIV. W. C. MACREADY

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, February 27, 1851.

MY DEAR MACREADY, — Forster told me to-day that you wish Tennyson's sonnet to be read after your health is given on Saturday.[1] I am perfectly certain that it would not do at that time. I am quite convinced that the audience would not receive it, under these exciting circumstances, as it ought to be received. If I had to read it I would on no account undertake to do so at that period, in a great room crowded with a dense company. I have an instinctive assurance that it would fail. Being with Bulwer this morning, I communicated your wish to him, and he immediately felt as I do. I could enter into many reasons which induce me to form this opinion. But I believe that you have that confidence in me that I may spare you the statement of them.

I want to know one thing from you. As I shall be obliged to be at the London Tavern in the afternoon of to-morrow, Friday (I write, observe, on Thursday night), I shall be much helped in the arrangements if you will send me your answer by a messenger (addressed here) on the receipt of this. Which

[1] When a dinner was to be given Macready upon his retirement from the stage at Drury Lane.

would you prefer — that "Auld Lang Syne" should be sung after your health is given and before you return thanks, or after you have spoken?

I cannot forbear a word about last night. I think I have told you sometimes, my much-loved friend, how, when I was a mere boy, I was one of your faithful and devoted adherents in the pit; I believe as true a member of that true host of followers as it has ever boasted. As I improved myself and was improved by favouring circumstances in mind and fortune, I only became the more earnest (if it were possible) in my study of you. No light portion of my life arose before me when the quiet vision to which I am beholden, in I don't know how great a degree, or for how much — who does? — faded so nobly from my bodily eyes last night. And if I were to try to tell you what I felt — of regret for its being past for ever, and of joy in the thought that you could have taken your leave of *me* but in God's own time — I should only blot this paper with some drops that would certainly not be of ink, and give very faint expression to very strong emotions.

What is all this in writing! It is only some sort of relief to my full heart, and shows very little of it to you; but that 's something, so I let it go.

Ever, my dearest Macready,

Your most affectionate friend.

P. S. — My very flourish departs from me for the moment.

CXLV. W. H. WILLS

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, Thursday Morning, April 3, 1851.

MY DEAR WILLS, — I took my threatened walk last night, but it yielded little but generalities.

However, I thought of something for *to-night*, that I think will make a splendid paper. I have an idea that it might be connected with the gas paper (making gas a great agent in an effective police), and made one of the articles. This is it: "A Night in a Station-House." If you would go down to our friend Mr. Yardley, at Scotland Yard, and get a letter or order to the acting chief authority at that station-[redacted] enable us to hear the charges, observe [redacted] the station-house all night, go roun[redacted]

ing policeman, etc., I would stay there, say from twelve to-night to four or five in the morning. We might have a "night-cap," a fire, and some tea at the office hard by. If you could conveniently borrow an hour or two from the night we could both go. If not, I would go alone. It would make a wonderful good paper at a most appropriate time, when the back slums of London are going to be invaded by all sorts of strangers.

You need n't exactly say that *I* was going *in propriâ* (unless it were necessary), and, of course, you would n't say that I propose to-night, because I am so worn by the sad arrangements in which I am engaged, and by what led to them, that I cannot take my natural rest. But to-morrow night we go to the gas-works. I might not be so disposed for this station-house observation as I shall be to-night for a long time, and I see a most singular and admirable chance for us in the descriptive way, not to be lost.

Therefore, if you will arrange the thing before I come down at four this afternoon, any of the Scotland Yard people will do it, I should think; if our friend by any accident should not be there, I will go into it.

If they should recommend any other station-house as better for the purpose, or would think it better for us to go to more than one under the guidance of some trustworthy man, of course we will pay any man and do as they recommend. But I think one topping station-house would be best.

Faithfully ever.

P. S. — I write from my bed.

CXLVI. W. C. MACREADY

Saturday, May 24, 1851.

My dear Macready, — We are getting in a good heap of money for the Guild. The comedy has been very much improved, in many respects, since you read it. The scene to which you refer is certainly one of the most telling in the play. And there *is* a farce to be produced on Tuesday next, wherein a distinguished amateur will sustain a variety of assumption-parts, and in particular, Samuel Weller and Mrs. Gamp, of which I say no more. I am pining for Broadstairs, where the children are at present. I lurk from the sun, during the best part of the day, in a villainous compound of darkness, canvas,

sawdust, general dust, stale gas (involving a vague smell of pepper), and disenchanted properties. But I hope to get down on Wednesday or Thursday.

Ah! you country gentlemen, who live at home at ease, how little do you think of us among the London fleas! But they tell me you are coming in for Dorsetshire. You must be very careful, when you come to town to attend to your parliamentary duties, never to ask your way of people in the streets. They will misdirect you for what the vulgar call "a lark," meaning, in this connection, a jest at your expense. Always go into some respectable shop or apply to a policeman. You will know him by his being dressed in blue, with very dull silver buttons, and by the top of his hat being made of sticking-plaster. You may perhaps see in some odd place an intelligent-looking man, with a curious little wooden table before him and three thimbles on it. He will want you to bet, but don't do it. He really desires to cheat you. And don't buy at auctions where the best plated goods are being knocked down for next to nothing. These, too, are delusions. If you wish to go to the play to see real good acting (though a little more subdued than perfect tragedy should be), I would recommend you to see —— at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane. Anybody will show it to you. It is near the Strand, and you may know it by seeing no company whatever at any of the doors. Cab fares are eightpence a mile. A mile London measure is half a Dorsetshire mile, recollect. Porter is twopence per pint; what is called stout is fourpence. The Zoölogical Gardens are in the Regent's Park, and the price of admission is one shilling. Of the streets, I would recommend you to see Regent Street and the Quadrant, Bond Street, Piccadilly, Oxford Street, and Cheapside. I think these will please you after a time, though the tumult and bustle will at first bewilder you. If I can serve you in any way, pray command me. And with my best regards to your happy family, so remote from this Babel,

Believe me, my dear friend,
Ever affectionately yours.

P. S. — I forgot to mention just now that the black equestrian figure you will see at Charing Cross, as you go down to the House, is a statue of *King Charles the First.*

CXLVII. THE HON. MRS. WATSON

BROADSTAIRS, KENT, July 11, 1851.

MY DEAR MRS. WATSON, — I am so desperately indignant with you for writing me that short apology for a note, and pretending to suppose that under any circumstances I could fail to read with interest anything *you* wrote to me, that I have more than half a mind to inflict a regular letter upon you. If I were not the gentlest of men I should do it!

Poor dear Haldimand, I have thought of him so often. That kind of decay is so inexpressibly affecting and piteous to me, that I have no words to express my compassion and sorrow. When I was at Abbotsford, I saw in a vile glass case the last clothes Scott wore. Among them an old white hat, which seemed to be tumbled and bent and broken by the uneasy, purposeless wandering, hither and thither, of his heavy head. It so embodied Lockhart's pathetic description of him when he tried to write, and laid down his pen and cried, that it associated itself in my mind with broken powers and mental weakness from that hour. I fancy Haldimand in such another, going listlessly about that beautiful place, and remembering the happy hours we have passed with him, and his goodness and truth. I think what a dream we live in, until it seems for the moment the saddest dream that ever was dreamed. Pray tell us if you hear more of him. We really loved him.

To go to the opposite side of life, let me tell you that a week or so ago I took Charley and three of his school-fellows down the river gipsying. I secured the services of Charley's godfather (an old friend of mine, and a noble fellow with boys), and went down to Slough, accompanied by two immense hampers from Fortnum and Mason, on (I believe) the wettest morning ever seen out of the tropics.

It cleared before we got to Slough; but the boys, who had got up at four (we being due at eleven), had horrible misgivings that we might not come, in consequence of which we saw them looking into the carriages before us, all face. They seemed to have no bodies whatever, but to be all face; their countenances lengthened to that surprising extent. When they saw us, the faces shut up as if they were upon strong springs, and their waistcoats developed themselves in the usual places.

When the first hamper came out of the luggage-van, I was conscious of their dancing behind the guard; when the second came out with bottles in it, they all stood wildly on one leg. We then got a couple of flies to drive to the boat-house. I put them in the first, but they could n't sit still a moment, and were perpetually flying up and down like the toy figures in the sham snuff-boxes. In this order we went on to "Tom Brown's, the tailor's," where they all dressed in aquatic costume, and then to the boat-house, where they all cried in shrill chorus for "Mahogany" — a gentleman, so called by reason of his sunburnt complexion, a waterman by profession. (He was likewise called during the day "Hog" and "Hogany," and seemed to be unconscious of any proper name whatsoever.) We embarked, the sun shining now, in a galley with a striped awning, which I had ordered for the purpose, and, all rowing hard, went down the river. We dined in a field; what I suffered for fear those boys should get drunk, the struggles I underwent in a contest of feeling between hospitality and prudence, must ever remain untold. I feel, even now, old with the anxiety of that tremendous hour. They were very good, however. The speech of one became thick, and his eyes too like lobsters' to be comfortable, but only temporarily. He recovered, and I suppose outlived the salad he took. I have heard nothing to the contrary, and I imagine I should have been implicated on the inquest if there had been one. We had tea and rashers of bacon at a public-house, and came home, the last five or six miles in a prodigious thunder-storm. This was the great success of the day, which they certainly enjoyed more than anything else. The dinner had been great, and Mahogany had informed them, after a bottle of light champagne, that he never would come up the river "with ginger company" any more. But the getting so completely wet through was the culminating part of the entertainment.. You never in your life saw such objects as they were; and their perfect unconsciousness that it was at all advisable to go home and change, or that there was anything to prevent their standing at the station two mortal hours to see me off, was wonderful. As to getting them to their dames with any sort of sense that they were damp, I abandoned the idea. I thought it a success when they went down the street as civilly as if they were just up and newly dressed, though they really looked as if you could have rubbed them to rags with a touch, like saturated curl-paper.

I am sorry you have not been able to see our play, which I suppose you won't now, for I take it you are not going on Monday, the 21st, our last night in town? It is worth seeing, not for the getting up (which modesty forbids me to approve), but for the little bijou it is, in the scenery, dresses, and appointments. They are such as never can be got together again, because such men as Stanfield, Roberts, Grieve, Haghe, Egg, and others, never can be again combined in such a work. Everything has been done at its best from all sorts of authorities, and it is really very beautiful to look at.

I find I am "used up" by the Exhibition. I don't say "there is nothing in it" — there 's too much. I have only been twice; so many things bewildered me. I have a natural horror of sights, and the fusion of so many sights in one has not decreased it. I am not sure that I have seen anything but the fountain and perhaps the Amazon. It is a dreadful thing to be obliged to be false, but when any one says, "Have you seen ——?" I say, "Yes," because if I don't, I know he 'll explain it, and I can't bear that. —— took all the school one day. The school was composed of a hundred "infants," who got among the horses' legs in coming to the main entrance from the Kensington Gate, and came walking from between the wheels of coaches undisturbed in mind; got among the horses' legs in crossing to the main entrance from the Kensington Gate, and came reeling out from between the wheels of coaches undisturbed in mind. They were clinging to horses, I am told, all over the park.

When they were collected and added up by the frantic monitors, they were all right. They were then regaled with cake, etc., and went tottering and staring all over the place; the greater part wetting their forefingers and drawing a wavy pattern on every accessible object. One infant strayed. He was not missed. Ninety-and-nine were taken home, supposed to be the whole collection, but this particular infant went to Hammersmith. He was found by the police at night, going round and round the turnpike, which he still supposed to be a part of the Exhibition. He had the same opinion of the police, also of Hammersmith work-house, where he passed the night. When his mother came for him in the morning, he asked when it would be over? It was a great Exhibition, he said, but he thought it long.

As I begin to have a foreboding that you will think the same of this act of vengeance of mine, this present letter, I shall make an end of it, with my heartiest and most loving remembrances to Watson. I should have liked him of all things to have been in the Eton expedition, tell him, and to have heard a song (by the bye, I have forgotten that) sung in the thunderstorm, solos by Charley, chorus by the friends, describing the career of a booby who was plucked at college, every verse ending: —

I don't care a fig what the people may think,
But what WILL the governor say!

— which was shouted with a deferential jollity towards myself, as a governor who had that day done a creditable action, and proved himself worthy of all confidence.

With love to the boys and girls,

Ever, dear Mrs. Watson,

Most sincerely yours.

CXLVIII. CHARLES KNIGHT

BROADSTAIRS, KENT, Sunday, July 27, 1851.

MY DEAR KNIGHT, — A most excellent "Shadow"![1] I have sent it up to the printer, and Wills is to send you a proof. Will you look carefully at all the earlier part, where the use of the past tense instead of the present a little hurts the picturesque effect? I understand each phase of the thing to be *always a thing present before the mind's eye* — a shadow passing before it. Whatever is done must be *doing*. Is it not so? For example, if I did the Shadow of Robinson Crusoe, I should not say he *was* a boy at Hull, when his father lectured him about going to sea, and so forth; but he *is* a boy at Hull. There he is, in that particular Shadow, eternally a boy at Hull; his life to me is a series of shadows, but there is no "was" in the case. If I choose to go to his manhood, I can. These shadows don't change as realities do. No phase of his existence passes away, if I choose to bring it to this unsubstantial and delightful life, the only death of which, to me, is *my* death, and thus he is immortal to unnumbered thousands. If I am right, will you look at the proof through the first third or

[1] Mr. Charles Knight was writing a series of papers in *Household Words*, called "Shadows."

half of the papers, and see whether the Factor comes before us in that way? If not, it is merely the alteration of the verb here and there that is requisite.

You say you are coming down to look for a place next week. Now, Jerrold says he is coming on Thursday, by the cheap express at half-past twelve, to return with me for the play early on Monday morning. Can't you make that holiday too? I have promised him our only spare bed, but we 'll find you a bed hard by, and shall be delighted "to eat and drink you," as an American once wrote to me. We will make expeditions to Herne Bay, Canterbury, where not? and drink deep draughts of fresh air. Come! They are beginning to cut the corn. You will never see the country so pretty. If you stay in town these days, you 'll do nothing. I feel convinced you 'll not buy the "Memoirs of a Man of Quality." Say you 'll come!

Ever affectionately.

CXLIX. HENRY AUSTIN

BROADSTAIRS, Sunday, September 7, 1851.

MY DEAR HENRY, — I am in that state of mind which you may (once) have seen described in the newspapers as "bordering on distraction;" the house given up to me, the fine weather going on (soon to break, I dare say), the painting season oozing away, my new book waiting to be born, and

NO WORKMEN ON THE PREMISES,

along of my not hearing from you!! I have torn all my hair off, and constantly beat my unoffending family. Wild notions have occurred to me of sending in my own plumber to do the drains. Then I remember that you have probably written to prepare *your* man, and restrain my audacious hand. Then Stone presents himself, with a most exasperatingly mysterious visage, and says that a rat has appeared in the kitchen, and it 's his opinion (Stone's, not the rat's) that the drains want "compo-ing;" for the use of which explicit language I could fell him without remorse. In my horrible desire to "compo" everything, the very postman becomes my enemy because he brings no letter from you; and, in short, I don't see what 's to become of me unless I hear from you to-morrow, which I have not the least expectation of doing.

Going over the house again, I have materially altered the plans — abandoned conservatory and front balcony — decided to make Stone's painting-room the drawing-room (it is nearly six inches higher than the room below), to carry the entrance passage right through the house to a back door leading to the garden, and to reduce the once intended drawing-room — now school-room — to a manageable size, making a door of communication between the new drawing-room and the study. Curtains and carpets, on a scale of awful splendour and magnitude, are already in preparation, and still — still —

NO WORKMEN ON THE PREMISES.

To pursue this theme is madness. Where are you? When are you coming home? Where is THE man who is to do the work? Does he know that an army of artificers must be turned in at once, and the whole thing finished out of hand? O rescue me from my present condition. Come up to the scratch, I entreat and implore you!

I send this to Lætitia to forward,

Being, as you well know why,
Completely floored by N. W., I
Sleep.

I hope you may be able to read this. My state of mind does not admit of coherence.

Ever affectionately.

P. S. — No WORKMEN ON THE PREMISES!

Ha! ha! ha! (I am laughing demoniacally.)

CL. FRANK STONE

8th September, 1851.

You never saw such a sight as the sands between this and Margate presented yesterday. This day fortnight a steamer laden with cattle, going from Rotterdam to the London market, was wrecked on the Goodwins — on which occasion, by the bye, the coming in at night of our Salvage Luggers laden with dead cattle, which were hoisted up upon the pier where they lay in

heaps, was a most picturesque and striking sight. The sea since Wednesday has been very rough, blowing in straight upon the land. Yesterday, the shore was strewn with hundreds of oxen, sheep, and pigs (and with bushels upon bushels of apples), in every state and stage of decay — burst open, rent asunder, lying with their stiff hoofs in the air, or with their great ribs yawning like the wrecks of ships — tumbled and beaten out of shape, and yet with a horrible sort of humanity about them. Hovering among these carcasses was every kind of water-side plunderer, pulling the horns out, getting the hides off, chopping the hoofs with pole-axes, etc., etc., attended by no end of donkey-carts, and spectral horses with scraggy necks, galloping wildly up and down as if there were something maddening in the stench. I never beheld such a demoniacal business!

Very faithfully yours.

CLI. HENRY AUSTIN

BROADSTAIRS, Monday, 8th September, 1851.

MY DEAR HENRY, — Your letter, received this morning, has considerably allayed the anguish of my soul. Our letters crossed, of course, as letters under such circumstances always do.

I am perpetually wandering (in fancy) up and down the house[1] and tumbling over the workmen; when I feel that they are gone to dinner I become low, when I look forward to their total abstinence on Sunday, I am wretched. The gravy at dinner has a taste of glue in it. I smell paint in the sea. Phantom lime attends me all the day long. I dream that I am a carpenter and can't partition off the hall. I frequently dance (with a distinguished company) in the drawing-room, and fall into the kitchen for want of a pillar.

A great to-do here. A steamer lost on the Goodwins yesterday, and our men bringing in no end of dead cattle and sheep. I stood a supper for them last night, to the unbounded gratification of Broadstairs. They came in from the wreck very wet and tired, and very much disconcerted by the nature of their prize — which, I suppose, after all, will have to be recommitted to the sea, when the hides and tallow are secured. One lean-faced boatman murmured, when they were all ruminative over

[1] Tavistock House.

the bodies as they lay on the pier: "Could n't sausages be made on it?" but retired in confusion shortly afterwards, overwhelmed by the execrations of the bystanders.

Ever affectionately.

P. S. — Sometimes I think ——'s bill will be too long to be added up until Babbage's calculating-machine shall be improved and finished. Sometimes that there is not paper enough ready made, to carry it over and bring it forward upon.

I dream, also, of the workmen every night. They make faces at me, and won't do anything.

CLII. MISS MARY BOYLE

BROADSTAIRS, KENT, October 10, 1851.

MY DEAR MISS BOYLE, — Your remembrance at such a time [1] — not thrown away upon me, trust me — is a sufficient assurance that you know how truly I feel towards you, and with what an earnest sympathy I must think of you now.

God be with you! There is indeed nothing terrible in such a death, nothing that we would undo, nothing that we may remember otherwise than with deeply thankful though with softened hearts.

Kate sends you her affectionate love. I inclose a note from Georgina. Pray give my kindest remembrances to your brother Cavendish, and believe me now and ever,

Faithfully your friend.

CLIII. MR. EELES

"HOUSEHOLD WORDS" OFFICE, Wednesday Evening, October 22, 1851.

DEAR MR. EELES, — I send you the list I have made for the book-backs. I should like the "History of a Short Chancery Suit" to come at the bottom of one recess, and the "Catalogue of Statues of the Duke of Wellington" at the bottom of the other. If you should want more titles, and will let me know how many, I will send them to you.

Faithfully yours.

[1] On the death of her mother.

LIST OF IMITATION BOOK-BACKS

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, 1851.

Five Minutes in China. 3 vols.
Forty Winks at the Pyramids. 2 vols.
Abernethy on the Constitution. 2 vols.
Mr. Green's Overland Mail. 2 vols.
Captain Cook's Life of Savage. 2 vols.
A Carpenter's Bench of Bishops. 2 vols.
Toot's Universal Letter-Writer. 2 vols.
Orson's Art of Etiquette.
Downeaster's Complete Calculator.
History of the Middling Ages. 6 vols.
Jonah's Account of the Whale.
Captain Parry's Virtues of Cold Tar.
Kant's Ancient Humbugs. 10 vols.
Bowwowdom. A Poem.
The Quarrelly Review. 4 vols.
The Gunpowder Magazine. 4 vols.
Steele. By the Author of "Ion."
The Art of Cutting the Teeth.
Matthew's Nursery Songs. 2 vols.
Paxton's Bloomers. 5 vols.
On the Use of Mercury by the Ancient Poets.
Drowsy's Recollections of Nothing. 3 vols.
Heavyside's Conversations with Nobody. 3 vols.
Commonplace Book of the Oldest Inhabitant. 2 vols.
Growler's Gruffiology, with Appendix. 4 vols.
The Books of Moses and Sons. 2 vols.
Burke (of Edinburgh) on the Sublime and Beautiful. 2 vols.
Teazer's Commentaries.
King Henry the Eighth's Evidences of Christianity. 5 vols.
Miss Biffin on Deportment.
Morrison's Pills Progress. 2 vols.
Lady Godiva on the Horse.
Munchausen's Modern Miracles. 4 vols.
Richardson's Show of Dramatic Literature. 12 vols.
Hansard's Guide to Refreshing Sleep. As many volumes as possible.

CLIV. HENRY AUSTIN

OFFICE OF "HOUSEHOLD WORDS," Saturday, October 25, 1851.

MY DEAR HENRY, — On the day of our departure, I thought we were going — backward — at a most triumphant pace; but yesterday we rather recovered. The painters still mislaid their brushes every five minutes, and chiefly whistled in the intervals; and the carpenters (especially the Pantechnicon) continued to look sideways with one eye down pieces of wood, as if they were absorbed in the contemplation of the perspective of the Thames Tunnel, and had entirely relinquished the vanities of this transitory world; but still there was an improvement, and it is confirmed to-day. White lime is to be seen in kitchens, the bath-room is gradually resolving itself from an abstract idea into a fact — youthful, extremely youthful, but a fact. The drawing-room encourages no hope whatever, nor the study. Staircase painted. Irish labourers howling in the school-room, but I don't know why. I see nothing. Gardener vigorously lopping the trees, and really letting in the light and

air. Foreman sweet-tempered but uneasy. Inimitable hovering gloomily through the premises all day, with an idea that a little more work is done when he flits, bat-like, through the rooms, than when there is no one looking on. Catherine all over paint. Mister McCann, encountering Inimitable in doorways, fades obsequiously into areas, and there encounters him again, and swoons with confusion. Several reams of blank paper constantly spread on the drawing-room walls, and sliced off again, which looks like insanity. Two men still clinking at the new stair-rails. I think they must be learning a tune; I cannot make out any other object in their proceedings.

Since writing the above, I have been up there again, and found the young paper-hanger putting on his slippers, and looking hard at the walls of the servants' room at the top of the house, as if he meant to paper it one of these days. May Heaven prosper his intentions!

When do you come back? I hope soon.

Ever affectionately.

CLV. MRS. CHARLES DICKENS

CLIFTON, November 13, 1851.

MY DEAREST KATE, — I have just received your second letter, and am quite delighted to find that all is going on so vigorously, and that you are in such a methodical, businesslike, and energetic state. I shall come home by the express on Saturday morning, and shall hope to be at home between eleven and twelve.

We had a noble night last night. The room (which is the largest but one in England) was crammed in every part. The effect of from thirteen to fourteen hundred people, all well dressed, and all seated in one unbroken chamber, except that the floor rose high towards the end of the hall, was most splendid, and we never played to a better audience. The enthusiasm was prodigious; the place delightful for speaking in; no end of gas; another hall for a dressing-room; an immense stage: and every possible convenience. We were all thoroughly pleased, I think, with the whole thing, and it was a very great and striking success. To-morrow night, having the new Hardman, I am going to try the play with all kinds of cuts, taking it, among other things, some half-dozen printed pages of Wills's Coffee-House."

We are very pleasant and cheerful. They are all going to Matthew Davenport Hill's to lunch this morning, and to see some woods about six or seven miles off. I prefer being quiet, and shall go out at my leisure and call on Elliot. We are very well lodged and boarded, and, living high up on the Downs, are quite out of the filth of Bristol.

I saw old Landor at Bath, who has bronchitis. When he was last in town, "Kenyon drove him about, by God, half the morning, under a most damnable pretence of taking him to where Walter was at school, and they never found the confounded house!" He had in his pocket on that occasion a souvenir for Walter in the form of a Union shirt-pin, which is now in my possession, and shall be duly brought home.

I am tired enough, and shall be glad when to-morrow night is over. We expect a very good house. Forster came up to town after the performance last night, and promised to report to you that all was well. Jerrold is in extraordinary force. I don't think I ever knew him so humorous. And this is all my news, which is quite enough. I am continually thinking of the house in the midst of all the bustle, but I trust it with such confidence to you that I am quite at my ease about it.

With best love to Georgy and the girls,

Ever, my dearest Kate, most affectionately yours.

P. S. — I forgot to say that Topham has suddenly come out as a juggler, and swallows candles, and does wonderful things with the poker very well indeed, but with a bashfulness and embarrassment extraordinarily ludicrous.

CLVI. MRS. GASKELL

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, Thursday Afternoon, December 5, 1851.

MY DEAR MRS. GASKELL, — I write in great haste to tell you that Mr. Wills, in the utmost consternation, has brought me your letter, just received (four o'clock), and that it is *too late* to recall your tale. I was so delighted with it that I put it first in the number (not hearing of any objection to my proposed alteration by return of post), and the number is now made up and in the printer's hands. I cannot possibly take the tale out — it has departed from me.

I am truly concerned for this, but I hope you will not blame

me for what I have done in perfect good faith. Any recollection of me from your pen cannot (as I think you know) be otherwise than truly gratifying to me; but with my name on every page of "Household Words," there would be — or at least I should feel — an impropriety in so mentioning myself. I was particular, in changing the author, to make it "Hood's Poems" in the most important place — I mean where the captain is killed — and I hope and trust that the substitution will not be any serious drawback to the paper in any eyes but yours. I would do anything rather than cause you a minute's vexation arising out of what has given me so much pleasure, and I sincerely beseech you to think better of it, and not to fancy that any shade has been thrown on your charming writing, by

The unfortunate but innocent.

P. S. — I write at a gallop, not to lose another post.

CLVII. W. C. MACREADY

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, January 31, 1852.

MY DEAR MACREADY, — If the "taxes on knowledge" mean the stamp duty, the paper duty, and the advertisement duty, they seem to me to be unnecessarily confounded, and unfairly too.

I have already declined to sign a petition for the removal of the stamp duty on newspapers. I think the reduced duty is some protection to the public against the rash and hasty launching of blackguard newspapers. I think the newspapers are made extremely accessible to the poor man at present, and that he would not derive the least benefit from the abolition of the stamp. It is not at all clear to me, supposing he wants "The Times" a penny cheaper, that he would get it a penny cheaper if the tax were taken off. If he supposes he would get in competition two or three new journals as good to choose from, he is mistaken; not knowing the immense resources and the gradually perfective machinery necessary to the production of such a journal. It appears to me to be a fair tax enough, very little in the way of individuals, not embarrassing to the public in its mode of being levied, and requiring some small consideration and pauses from the American kind of newspaper projectors. Further, a committee has reported in favour

of the repeal, and the subject may be held to need no present launching.

The repeal of the paper duty would benefit the producers of periodicals immensely. It would make a very large difference to me, in the case of such a journal as "Household Words." But the gain to the public would be very small. It would not make the difference of enabling me, for example, to reduce the price of "Household Words," by its fractional effect upon a copy, or to increase the quantity of matter. I might, in putting the difference into my pocket, improve the quality of the paper a little, but not one man in a thousand would notice it. It *might* (though I am not sure even of this) remove the difficulties in the way of a deserving periodical with a small sale. Charles Knight holds that it would. But the case, on the whole, appeared to me so slight, when I went to Downing Street with a deputation on the subject, that I said (in addressing the Chancellor of the Exchequer) I could not honestly maintain it for a moment as against the soap duty, or any other pressing on the mass of the poor.

The advertisement duty has this preposterous anomaly, that a footman in want of a place pays as much in the way of tax for the expression of his want, as Professor Holloway pays for the whole list of his miraculous cures.

But I think, at this time especially, there is so much to be considered in the necessity the country will be under of having money, and the necessity of justice it is always under, to consider the physical and moral wants of the poor man's home, as to justify a man in saying: "I must wait a little, all taxes are more or less objectionable, and so no doubt are these, but we must have some; and I have not made up my mind that all these things that are mixed up together *are* taxes on knowledge in reality."

Kate and Georgy unite with me in kindest and heartiest love to dear Mrs. Macready. We are always with you in spirit, and always talking about you. I am obliged to conclude very hastily, being beset to-day with business engagements. Saw the lecture and was delighted; thought the idea admirable. Again, loves upon loves to dear Mrs. Macready and to Miss Macready also, and Kate and all the house. I saw —— play (O Heaven!) "Macbeth," the other night, in three hours and fifty minutes, which is quick, I think. Ever and always affectionately.

CLVIII. SIR EDWARD BULWER LYTTON

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, Sunday Night, 15th February, 1852.

MY DEAR BULWER, — I left Liverpool at four o'clock this morning, and am so blinded by excitement, gas, and waving hats and handkerchiefs, that I can hardly see to write, but I cannot go to bed without telling you what a triumph we have had. Allowing for the necessarily heavy expenses of all kinds, I believe we can hardly fund less than a Thousand Pounds out of this trip alone. And, more than that, the extraordinary interest taken in the idea of the Guild by "this grand people of England" down in these vast hives, and the enthusiastic welcome they give it, assure me that we may do what we will if we will only be true and faithful to our design. There is a social recognition of it which I cannot give you the least idea of. I sincerely believe that we have the ball at our feet, and may throw it up to the very Heaven of Heavens. And I don't speak for myself alone, but for all our people, and not least of all for Forster, who has been absolutely stunned by the tremendous earnestness of these great places.

To tell you (especially after your affectionate letter) what I would have given to have had you there would be idle. But I can most seriously say that all the sights of the earth turned pale in my eyes, before the sight of three thousand people with one heart among them, and no capacity in them, in spite of all their efforts, of sufficiently testifying to you how they believe you to be right, and feel that they cannot do enough to cheer you on. They understood the play (*far better acted by this time than ever you have seen it*) as well as you do. They allowed nothing to escape them. They rose up, when it was over, with a perfect fury of delight, and the Manchester people sent a requisition after us to Liverpool to say that if we will go back there in May, when we act at Birmingham (as of course we shall) they will joyfully undertake to fill the Free Trade Hall again. Among the Tories of Liverpool the reception was equally enthusiastic. We played, two nights running, to a hall crowded to the roof — more like the opera at Genoa or Milan than anything else I can compare it to. We dined at the Town Hall magnificently, and it made no difference in the response. I said what we were quietly determined to do (when the Guild was

given as the toast of the night), and really they were so noble and generous in their encouragement that I should have been more ashamed of myself than I hope I ever shall be, if I could have felt conscious of having ever for a moment faltered in the work.

I will answer for Birmingham — for any great working-town to which we chose to go. We have won a position for the idea which years upon years of labour could not have given it. I believe its worldly fortunes have been advanced in this last week fifty years at least. I feebly express to you what Forster (who could n't be at Liverpool, and has not those shouts ringing in his ears) has felt from the moment he set foot in Manchester. Believe me we may carry a perfect fiery cross through the North of England, and over the Border, in this cause, if need be — not only to the enrichment of the cause, but to the lasting enlistment of the people's sympathy.

I have been so happy in all this that I could have cried on the shortest notice any time since Tuesday. And I do believe that our whole body would have gone to the North Pole with me if I had shown them good reason for it.

I hope I am not so tired but that you may be able to read this. I have been at it almost incessantly day and night for a week, and I am afraid my handwriting suffers. But in all other respects I am only a giant refreshed.

We meet next Saturday you recollect? Until then, and ever afterwards,

Believe me, heartily yours.

CLIX. MRS. COWDEN CLARKE

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, 3d March, 1852.

MY DEAR MRS. CLARKE, — It is almost an impertinence to tell you how delightful your flowers were to me; for you who thought of that beautiful and delicately timed token of sympathy and remembrance, must know it very well already.

I do assure you that I have hardly ever received anything with so much pleasure in all my life. They are not faded yet — are on my table here — but never can fade out of my remembrance.

I should be less than a Young Gas, and more than an Old Manager — that commemorative portfolio is here too — if I

could relieve my heart of half that it could say to you. All my house are my witnesses that you have quite filled it, and this note is my witness that I can *not* empty it.

Ever faithfully and gratefully your friend.

CLX. JAMES BOWER HARRISON

LONDON, TAVISTOCK HOUSE, 16th March, 1852.

DEAR SIR, — I beg to thank you for your interesting pamphlet, and to add that I shall be very happy to accept an article from you on the subject[1] for "Household Words." I should already have suggested to you that I should have great pleasure in receiving contributions from one so well and peculiarly qualified to treat of many interesting subjects, but that I felt a delicacy in encroaching on your other occupations. Will you excuse my remarking that, to make an article on this particular subject useful, it is essential to address the employed as well as the employers? In the case of the Sheffield grinders the difficulty was, for many years, not with the masters, but the men. Painters who use white lead are with the greatest difficulty persuaded to be particular in washing their hands, and I dare say that I need not remind you that one could not generally induce domestic servants to attend to the commonest sanitary principles in their work without absolutely forcing them to experience their comfort and convenience.

Dear Sir, very faithfully yours.

CLXI. CHARLES KNIGHT

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, June 29, 1852.

MY DEAR KNIGHT, — A thousand thanks for the "Shadow," which is charming. May you often go (out of town) and do likewise!

I dined with Charles Kemble, yesterday, to meet Emil Devrient, the German actor. He said (Devrient is my antecedent) that Ophelia *spoke* the snatches of ballads in their German version of "Hamlet," because they did n't know the airs. Tom Taylor said that you had published the airs in your "Shakespeare." I said that if it were so, I knew you would be happy to place them at the German's service. If you have got them

[1] The injurious effects of the manufacture of lucifer matches on the employed.

and will send them to me, I will write to Devrient (who knows no English) a French explanation and reminder of the circumstance, and will tell him that you responded like a man and a — I was going to say publisher, but you are nothing of the sort, except as Tonson. Then indeed you are every inch a pub.!

Ever affectionately.

CLXII. LORD JOHN RUSSELL

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, Wednesday, June 30, 1852.

MY DEAR LORD, — I am most truly obliged to you for your kind note, and for your so generously thinking of me in the midst of your many occupations. I do assure you that your ever-ready consideration had already attached me to you in the warmest manner, and made me very much your debtor. I thank you unaffectedly and very earnestly, and am proud to be held in your remembrance.

Believe me always, yours faithfully and obliged.

CLXIII. MISS MARY BOYLE

10, CAMDEN CRESCENT, DOVER, July 22, 1852.

MY DEAR MARY, — This is indeed a noble letter. The description of the family is quite amazing. I *must* return it myself to say that I HAVE appreciated it.

I am going to do "Used Up" at Manchester on the 2d of September. Oh, think of that! With another Mary!!! How can I ever say, "*Dear* Joe, if you like!" The voice may fully frame the falsehood, but the heart — the heart, Mr. Wurzel — will have no part in it.

My dear Mary, you do scant justice to Dover. It is not quite a place to my taste, being too bandy (I mean musical, no reference to its legs), and infinitely too genteel. But the sea is very fine, and the walks are quite remarkable. There are two ways of going to Folkestone, both lovely and striking in the highest degree; and there are heights, and downs, and country roads, and I don't know what, everywhere.

To let you into a secret, I am not quite sure that I ever did like, or ever shall like, anything quite so well as "Copperfield." But I foresee, I think, some very good things in "Bleak House." I should n't wonder if they were the identical things

that D'Israeli sees looming in the distance. I behold them in the months ahead and weep.

Watson seemed, when I saw him last, to be holding on as by a sheet-anchor to theatricals at Christmas. Then, O rapture! but be still, my fluttering heart.

This is one of what I call my wandering days before I fall to work. I seem to be always looking at such times for something I have not found in life, but may possibly come to a few thousands of years hence, in some other part of some other system. God knows. At all events I won't put your pastoral little pipe out of tune by talking about it. I'll go and look for it on the Canterbury Road among the hop-gardens and orchards. Ever faithfully your friend,

JOE.

CLXIV. CHARLES KNIGHT

10, CAMDEN CRESCENT, DOVER, Sunday, August 1, 1852.

MY DEAR KNIGHT, — I don't see why you should go to the Ship, and I won't stand it. The state apartment will be occupied by the Duke of Middlesex [1] (whom I think you know), but we can easily get a bed for you hard by. Therefore you will please to drive here next Saturday evening. Our regular dinner-hour is half-past five. If you are later, you will find something ready for you.

If you go on in that way about your part, I shall think you want to play Mr. Gabblewig. Your rôle, though a small one on the stage, is a large one off it; and no man is more important to the Guild, both on and off.

My dear friend Watson! Dead after an illness of four days. He dined with us this day three weeks. I loved him as my heart, and cannot think of him without tears.

Ever affectionately.

CLXV. MARK LEMON

DOVER, August 5, 1852.

MY DEAR MARK, — Poor dear Watson was dead when the paragraph in the paper appeared. He was buried in his own church yesterday. Last Sunday three weeks (the day before he went abroad) he dined with us, and was quite well and

[1] Mr. Frank Stone acted this character in *Not so Bad as we Seem*.

happy. She has come home, is at Rockingham with the children, and does not weakly desert his grave, but sets up her rest by it from the first. He had been wandering in his mind a little before his death, but recovered consciousness, and fell asleep (she says) quite gently and peacefully in her arms.

I loved him very much, and God knows he deserved it.

Ever affectionately.

CLXVI. THE EARL OF CARLISLE

10, Camden Crescent, Dover, Thursday, August 5, 1852.

My dear Lord Carlisle, — 'Peared to me (as Uncle Tom would say) until within these last few days, that I should be able to write to you, joyfully accepting your Saturday's invitation after Newcastle, in behalf of all whom it concerned. But the Sunderland people rushed into the field to propose our acting there on that Saturday, the only possible night. And as it is the concluding Guild expedition, and the Guild has a paramount claim on us, I have been obliged to knock my own inclinations on the head, cut the throat of my own wishes, and bind the Company hand and foot to the Sunderland lieges. I don't mean to tell them now of your invitation until we shall have got out of that country. There might be rebellion. We are staying here for the autumn.

Is there any hope of your repeating your visit to these coasts? Ever faithfully yours.

CLXVII. THE HON. MRS. WATSON

ON THE DEATH OF MR. WATSON.

10, Camden Crescent, Dover, August 5, 1852.

My dear, dear Mrs. Watson, — I cannot bear to be silent longer, though I know full well — no one better I think — how your love for him, and your trust in God, and your love for your children will have come to the help of such a nature as yours, and whispered better things than any friendship can, however faithful and affectionate.

We held him so close in our hearts — all of us here — and have been so happy with him, and so used to say how good he was, and what a gentle, generous, noble spirit he had, and how he shone out among commoner men as something so real and

genuine, and full of every kind of worthiness, that it has often brought the tears into my eyes to talk of him; we have been so accustomed to do this when we looked forward to years of unchanged intercourse, that now, when everything but truth goes down into the dust, those recollections which make the sword so sharp pour balm into the wound. And if it be a consolation to us to know the virtues of his character, and the reasons that we had for loving him, oh, how much greater is your comfort who were so devoted to him, and were the happiness of his life!

We have thought of you every day and every hour; we think of you now in the dear old house, and know how right it is, for his dear children's sake, that you should have bravely set up your rest in the place consecrated by their father's memory, and within the same summer shadows that fall upon his grave. We try to look on, through a few years, and to see the children brightening it, and George a comfort and a pride and an honour to you; and although it *is* hard to think of what we have lost, we know how something of it will be restored by your example and endeavours, and the blessing that will descend upon them. We know how the time will come when some reflection of that cordial, unaffected, most affectionate presence, which we can never forget, and never would forget if we could — such is God's great mercy — will shine out of your boy's eyes upon you, his best friend and his last consoler, and fill the void there is now.

May God, who has received into his rest through this affliction as good a man as ever I can know and love and mourn for on this earth, be good to you, dear friends, through these coming years! May all those compassionate and hopeful lessons of the great Teacher who shed divine tears for the dead bring their full comfort to you! I have no fear of that, my confidence is certainty.

I cannot write what I wish; I had so many things to say, I seem to have said none. It is so with the remembrances we send. I cannot put them into words.

If you should ever set up a record in the little church, I would try to word it myself, and God knows out of the fulness of my heart, if you should think it well.

My dear friend,

Yours, with the truest affection and sympathy.

CLXVIII. JOHN FORSTER

SUNDERLAND, August 29, 1852.

The inclosure forgotten in my last was a little printed announcement which I have had distributed at the doors wherever we go, knocking "Two O'clock in the Morning" bang out of the bills. Funny as it used to be, it is become impossible to get anything out of it after the scream of "Mr. Nightingale's Diary." The comedy is so far improved by the reductions which your absence and other causes have imposed on us, that it acts now only two hours and twenty-five minutes, all waits included, and goes "like wildfire," as Mr. Tonson says. We have had prodigious houses, though smaller rooms (as to their actual size) than I had hoped for. The Duke was at Derby, and no end of minor radiances. Into the room at Newcastle (where Lord Carlisle was, by the bye) they squeezed six hundred people, at twelve and sixpence, into a space reasonably capable of holding three hundred. Last night, in a hall built like a theatre, with pit, boxes, and gallery, we had about twelve hundred — I dare say more. They began with a round of applause when Coote's white waistcoat appeared in the orchestra, and wound up the farce with three deafening cheers. I never saw such good fellows. Stanny is their fellow townsman; was born here; and they applauded his scene as if it were himself. But what I suffered from a dreadful anxiety that hung over me all the time, I can never describe. When we got here at noon, it appeared that the hall was a perfectly new one, and had only had the slates put upon the roof by torchlight overnight. Further, that the proprietors of some opposition rooms had declared the building to be unsafe, and that there was a panic in the town about it; people having had their money back, and being undecided whether to come or not, and all kinds of such horrors. I did n't know what to do. The horrible responsibility of risking an accident of that awful nature seemed to rest wholly upon me; for I had only to say we would n't act, and there would be no chance of danger. I was afraid to take Sloman into council lest the panic should infect our men. I asked W. what *he* thought, and he consolingly observed that his digestion was so bad that death had no terrors for him! I went and looked at the place; at the rafters, walls,

pillars, and so forth; and fretted myself into a belief that they really were slight! To crown all, there was an arched iron roof without any brackets or pillars, on a new principle! The only comfort I had was in stumbling at length on the builder, and finding him a plain practical North-countryman with a foot-rule in his pocket. I took him aside, and asked him should we, or could we, prop up any weak part of the place: especially the dressing-rooms, which were under our stage, the weight of which must be heavy on a new floor, and dripping wet walls. He told me there was n't a stronger building in the world; and that, to allay the apprehension, they had opened it, on Thursday night, to thousands of the working people, and induced them to sing, and beat with their feet, and make every possible trial of the vibration. Accordingly there was nothing for it but to go on. I was in such dread, however, lest a false alarm should spring up among the audience and occasion a rush, that I kept Catherine and Georgina out of the front. When the curtain went up and I saw the great sea of faces rolling up to the roof, I looked here and looked there, and thought I saw the gallery out of the perpendicular, and fancied the lights in the ceiling were not straight. Rounds of applause were perfect agony to me, I was so afraid of their effect upon the building. I was ready all night to rush on in case of an alarm — a false alarm was my main dread — and implore the people for God's sake to sit still. I had our great farce-bell rung to startle Sir Geoffrey instead of throwing down a piece of wood, which might have raised a sudden apprehension. I had a palpitation of the heart, if any of our people stumbled up or down a stair. I am sure I never acted better, but the anxiety of my mind was so intense, and the relief at last so great, that I am half dead to-day, and have not yet been able to eat or drink anything or to stir out of my room. I shall never forget it. As to the short time we had for getting the theatre up; as to the upsetting, by a runaway pair of horses, of one of the vans at the Newcastle railway station *with all the scenery in it, every atom of which was turned over;* as to the fatigue of our carpenters, who have now been up four nights, and who were lying dead asleep in the entrances last night, I say nothing, after the other gigantic nightmare, except that Sloman's splendid knowledge of his business, and the good temper and cheerfulness of all the workmen, are capital. I mean to give them a supper at

Liverpool, and address them in a neat and appropriate speech. We dine at two to-day (it is now one) and go to Sheffield at four, arriving there at about ten. I had been as fresh as a daisy; walked from Nottingham to Derby, and from Newcastle here; but seem to have had my nerves crumpled up last night, and have an excruciating headache. That 's all at present. I shall never be able to bear the smell of new deal and fresh mortar again as long as I live.

CLXIX. W. C. MACREADY

HÔTEL DES BAINS, BOULOGNE, Tuesday Night, October 5, 1852.

MY DEAREST MACREADY, — I received your melancholy letter[1] while we were staying at Dover, a few days after it was written; but I thought it best not to write to you until you were at home again, among your dear children.

Its tidings were not unexpected to us, had been anticipated in many conversations, often thought of under many circumstances; but the shock was scarcely lessened by this preparation. The many happy days we have passed together came crowding back; all the old cheerful times arose before us; and the remembrance of what we had loved so dearly and seen under so many aspects — all natural and delightful and affectionate and ever to be cherished — was, how pathetic and touching you know best!

But my dear, dear Macready, this is not the first time you have felt that the recollection of great love and happiness associated with the dead soothes while it wounds. And while I can imagine that the blank beside you may grow wider every day for many days to come, I *know* — I think — that from its depths such comfort will arise as only comes to great hearts like yours, when they can think upon their trials with a steady trust in God.

My dear friend, I have known her so well, have been so happy in her regard, have been so light-hearted with her, have interchanged so many tender remembrances of you with her when you were far away, and have seen her ever so simply and truly anxious to be worthy of you, that I cannot write as I would, and as I know I ought. As I would press your hand in your distress, I let this note go from me. I understand

[1] On the death of Mrs. Macready.

your grief, I deeply feel the reason that there is for it, yet in that very feeling find a softening consolation that must spring up a hundred thousand fold for you. May Heaven prosper it in your breast, and the spirits that have gone before, from the regions of mercy to which they have been called, smooth the path you have to tread alone! Children are left you. Your good sister (God bless her!) is by your side. You have devoted friends, and more reasons than most men to be self-reliant and steadfast. Something is gone that never in this world can be replaced, but much is left, and it is a part of her life, her death, her immortality.

Catherine and Georgina, who are with me here, send you their overflowing love and sympathy. We hope that in a little while, and for a little while at least, you will come among us, who have known the happiness of being in this bond with you, and will not exclude us from participation in your past and future.

Ever, my dearest Macready, with unchangeable affection,

Yours in all love and truth.

CLXX. W. H. WILLS

HÔTEL DES BAINS, BOULOGNE, Tuesday, October 12, 1852.

MY DEAR WILLS, —

H. W.

I have thought of the Christmas number, but not very successfully, because I have been (and still am) constantly occupied with "Bleak House." I purpose returning home either on Sunday or Monday, as my work permits, and we will, immediately thereafter, dine at the office and talk it over, so that you may get all the men to their work.

The fault of ——'s poem, besides its intrinsic meanness as a composition, is that it goes too glibly with the comfortable idea (of which we have had a great deal too much in England since the Continental commotions) that a man is to sit down make himself domestic and meek, no matter what is done n. It wants a stronger appeal to rulers in general to let lo this, fairly, by governing them well. As it stands, it about the tract-mark ("Dairyman's Daughter," etc.) of cal morality, and don't think that it is necessary to write

down to any part of our audience. I always hold that to be as great a mistake as can be made.

I wish you would mention to Thomas, that I think the paper on hops *extremely well done.* He has quite caught the idea we want, and caught it in the best way. In pursuing the bridge subject, I think it would be advisable to look up the *Thames police.* I have a misty notion of some capital papers coming out of it. Will you see to this branch of the tree among the other branches ?

MYSELF

To Chapman I will write. My impression is that I shall not subscribe to the Hood monument, as I am not at all favourable to such posthumous honours.

Ever faithfully.

CLXXI. W. H. WILLS

HÔTEL DES BAINS, BOULOGNE, Wednesday Night, October 13, 1852.

MY DEAR WILLS, — The number coming in after dinner, since my letter was written and posted, I have gone over it.

I am grievously depressed by it; it is so exceedingly bad. If you have anything else to put first, don't put ——'s paper first. (There is nothing better for a beginning in the number as it stands, but this is very bad.) It is a mistake to think of it as a first article. The article itself is in the main a mistake. Firstly, the subject requires the greatest discretion and nicety of touch. And secondly, it is all wrong and self-contradictory. Nobody can for a moment suppose that "sporting" amusements are the sports of the PEOPLE; the whole gist of the best part of the description is to show that they are the amusements of a peculiar and limited class. The greater part of them are at a miserable discount (horse-racing excepted, which has been already sufficiently done in H. W.), and there is no reason for running amuck at them at all. I have endeavoured to remove much of my objection (and I think have done so), but, both in purpose and in any general address, it is as wide of a first article as anything can well be. It would do best in the opening of the number.

About Sunday in Paris there is no kind of doubt. Take it out. Such a thing as that crucifixion, unless it were done in a

masterly manner, we have no business to stagger families with. Besides, the name is a comprehensive one, and should include a quantity of fine matter. Lord bless me, what I could write under that head!

Strengthen the number, pray, by anything good you may have. It is a very dreary business as it stands.

The proofs want a thorough revision.

In haste, going to bed. Ever faithfully.

P. S. — I want a name for Miss Martineau's paper.

TRIUMPHANT CARRIAGES (or TRIUMPHAL).
DUBLIN STOUTHEARTEDNESS.
PATIENCE AND PREJUDICE.

Take which you like best.

CLXXII. JOHN WATKINS

Monday, October 13, 1852.

SIR, — On my return to town I find the letter awaiting me which you did me the favour to address to me, I believe — for it has no date — some days ago.

I have the greatest tenderness for the memory of Hood, as I had for himself. But I am not very favourable to posthumous memorials in the monument way, and I should exceedingly regret to see any such appeal as you contemplate made public, remembering another public appeal that was made and responded to after Hood's death. I think that I best discharge my duty to my deceased friend, and best consult the respect and love with which I remember him, by declining to join in any such public endeavours as that which you (in all generosity and singleness of purpose, I am sure) advance. I shall have a melancholy gratification in privately assisting to place a simple and plain record over the remains of a great writer that should be as modest as he was himself, but I regard any other monument in connection with his mortal resting-place as a mistake.

I am, sir, your faithful servant.

CLXXIII. REV. JAMES WHITE

OFFICE OF "HOUSEHOLD WORDS," Tuesday, October 19, 1852.

MY DEAR WHITE, — We are now getting our Christmas extra number together, and I think you are the boy to do, if you will, one of the stories.

I propose to give the number some fireside name, and to make it consist entirely of short stories supposed to be told by a family sitting round the fire. *I don't care about their referring to Christmas at all;* nor do I design to connect them together, otherwise than by their names, as: —

THE GRANDFATHER'S STORY.
THE FATHER'S STORY.
THE DAUGHTER'S STORY.
THE SCHOOLBOY'S STORY.
THE CHILD'S STORY.
THE GUEST'S STORY.
THE OLD NURSE'S STORY.

The grandfather might very well be old enough to have lived in the days of the highwaymen. Do you feel disposed, from fact, fancy, or both, to do a good winter-hearth story of a highwayman? If you do, I embrace you (per post), and throw up a cap I have purchased for the purpose into mid-air.

Think of it and write me a line in reply. We are all well and blooming.

Are you never coming to town any more? Never going to drink port again, metropolitaneously, but *always* with Fielden?

Love to Mrs. White and the children, if Lotty be not out of the list long ago. Ever faithfully, my dear White.

CLXXIV. THE HON. MRS. WATSON

ATHENÆUM, Monday, November 22, 1852.

MY DEAR MRS. WATSON, — Having just now finished my work for the time being, I turn in here in the course of a rainy walk, to have the gratification of writing a few lines to you. If my occupations with this same right hand were less numer-

ous, you would soon be tired of me, I should write to you so often.

You asked Catherine a question about "Bleak House." Its circulation is half as large again as "Copperfield"! I have just now come to the point I have been patiently working up in the writing, and I hope it will suggest to you a pretty and affecting thing. In the matter of "Uncle Tom's Cabin," I partly though not entirely agree with Mr. James. No doubt a much lower art will serve for the handling of such a subject in fiction, than for a launch on the sea of imagination without such a powerful bark; but there are many points in the book very admirably done. There is a certain St. Clair, a New Orleans gentleman, who seems to me to be conceived with great power and originality. If he had not "a Grecian outline of face," which I began to be a little tired of in my earliest infancy, I should think him unexceptionable. He has a sister, too, a maiden lady from New England, in whose person the besetting weaknesses and prejudices of the Abolitionists themselves, on the subject of the blacks, are set forth in the liveliest and truest colours and with the greatest boldness.

I have written for "Household Words" of this next publication day an article on the State funeral,[1] showing why I consider it altogether a mistake, to be temperately but firmly objected to; which I dare say will make a good many of the admirers of such things highly indignant. It may have right and reason on its side, however, none the less.

Charley and I had a great talk at Dover about his going into the army, when I thought it right to set before him fairly and faithfully the objections to that career, no less than its advantages. The result was that he asked in a very manly way for time to consider. So I appointed to go down to Eton on a certain day at the beginning of this month, and resume the subject. We resumed it accordingly at the White Hart, at Windsor, and he came to the conclusion that he would rather be a merchant, and try to establish some good house of business, where he might find a path perhaps for his younger brothers, and stay at home, and make himself the head of that long small procession. I was very much pleased with him indeed; he showed a fine sense and a fine feeling in the whole matter. We have arranged,

[1] The great Duke of Wellington's funeral. The article will be found in vol. xxviii. of this edition of Dickens's works, p. 461, under the title *Trading sad.*

therefore, that he shall leave Eton at Christmas, and go to Germany after the holidays, to become well acquainted with that language, now most essential in such a walk of life as he will probably tread.

And I think this is the whole of my news. We are always talking of you at home. Mary Boyle dined with us a little while ago. You look out, I imagine, on a waste of water. When I came from Windsor, I thought I must have made a mistake and got into a boat (in the dark) instead of a railway carriage. Catherine and Georgina send their kindest loves. I am ever, with the best and truest wishes of my heart, my dear Mrs. Watson, Your most affectionate friend.

CLXXV. REV. JAMES WHITE

OFFICE OF "HOUSEHOLD WORDS," Monday, November 22, 1852.

MY DEAR WHITE, — First and foremost, there is no doubt whatever of your story suiting "Household Words." It is a very good story indeed, and would be serviceable at any time. I am not quite so clear of its suiting the Christmas number, for this reason. You know what the spirit of the Christmas number is. When I suggested the stories being about a highwayman, I got hold of that idea as being an adventurous one, including various kinds of wrong, expressing a state of society no longer existing among us, and pleasant to hear (therefore) from an old man. Now, your highwayman not being a real highwayman after all, the kind of suitable Christmas interest I meant to awaken in the story is not in it. Do you understand? For an ordinary number it is quite unobjectionable. If you should think of any other idea, narratable by an old man, which you think would strike the chord of the season; and if you should find time to work it out during the short remainder of this month, I should be greatly pleased to have it. In any case, this story goes straightway into type.

What tremendous weather it is! Our best loves to all at home. (I have just bought thirty bottles of the most stunning port on earth, which Ellis of the Star and Garter, Richmond, wrote to me of.)

I think you will find some good going in the next "Bleak House." I write shortly, having been working my head off.

Ever affectionately yours.

CLXXVI. MRS. GASKELL

OFFICE OF "HOUSEHOLD WORDS," Wednesday, December 1, 1852.

MY DEAR MRS. GASKELL, — I send you the proof of "The Old Nurse's Story," with my proposed alteration. I shall be glad to know whether you approve of it. To assist you in your decision, I send you, also inclosed, the original ending. And I have made a line with ink across the last slip but one, where the alteration begins. Of course if you wish to enlarge, explain, or re-alter, you will do it. Do not keep the proof longer than you can help, as I want to get to press with all despatch.

I hope I address this letter correctly. I am far from sure. In haste.

Ever faithfully yours.

CLXXVII. W. H. WILLS

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, Thursday, December 9, 1852.

MY DEAR WILLS, — I am driven mad by dogs, who have taken it into their accursed heads to assemble every morning in the piece of ground opposite, and who have barked this morning *for five hours without intermission;* positively rendering it impossible for me to work, and so making what is really ridiculous quite serious to me. I wish, between this and dinner, you would send John to see if he can hire a gun, with a few caps, some powder, and a few charges of small shot. If you duly commission him with a card, he can easily do it. And if I get those implements up here to-night, I'll be the death of some of them to-morrow morning.

Ever faithfully.

CLXXVIII. REV. JAMES WHITE

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, Thursday Evening, December 9, 1852.

MY DEAR WHITE, — I hear you are not going to poor Macready's. Now, don't you think it would do you good to come here instead? *I* say it would, and I ought to know! We can give you everything but a bed (all ours are occupied in consequence of the boys being at home), and shall all be delighted to leave the bed to us, and we'll find one hard by. I

say nothing of the last day of the old year, and the dancing out of that good old worthy that will take place here (for you might like to hear the bells at home); but after the twentieth, I shall be comparatively at leisure, and good for anything or nothing. Don't you consider it your duty to your family to come? *I* do, and I again say that I ought to know.

Our best love to Mrs. White and Lotty — happily so much better, we rejoice to hear — and all.

So no more at present from

THE INIMITABLE B.

CLXXIX. MRS. GASKELL

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, Friday, December 7, 1852.

MY DEAR MRS. GASKELL, — I received your kind note yesterday morning with the truest gratification, for I *am* the writer of "The Child's Story," as well as of "The Poor Relation's." I assure you, you have given me the liveliest and heartiest pleasure by what you say of it.

I don't claim for my ending of "The Nurse's Story" that it would have made it a bit better. All I can urge in its behalf is, that it is what I should have done myself. But there is no doubt of the story being admirable as it stands, and there *is* some doubt (I think) whether Forster would have found anything wrong in it, if he had not known of my hammering over the proofs in making up the number, with all the three endings before me.

With kindest regards to Mr. Gaskell,

Ever faithfully yours.

CLXXX. WILKIE COLLINS

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, Monday, December 20, 1852.

MY DEAR COLLINS, — If I did not know that you are likely to have a forbearing remembrance of my occupation, I should be full of remorse for not having sooner thanked you for "Basil."

Not to play the sage or the critic (neither of which parts, I hope, is at all in my line), but to say what is the friendly truth, I may assure you that I have read the book with very great interest, and with a very thorough conviction that you have a call to this same art of fiction. I think the probabilities here

and there require a little more respect than you are disposed to show them, and I have no doubt that the prefatory letter would have been better away, on the ground that a book (of all things) should speak for and explain itself. But the story contains admirable writing, and many clear evidences of a very delicate discrimination of character. It is delightful to find throughout that you have taken great pains with it besides, and have "gone at it" with a perfect knowledge of the jolter-headedness of the conceited idiots who suppose that volumes are to be tossed off like pancakes, and that any writing can be done without the utmost application, the greatest patience, and the steadiest energy of which the writer is capable.

For all these reasons, I have made "Basil's" acquaintance with great gratification, and entertain a high respect for him. And I hope I shall become intimate with many worthy descendants of his, who are yet in the limbo of creatures waiting to be born.

Always faithfully yours.

P. S. — I am open to any proposal to go anywhere any day or days this week. Fresh air and change in any amount I am ready for. If I could only find an idle man (this is a general observation), he would find the warmest recognition in this direction.

CLXXXI. FRANK STONE, A. R. A.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, Monday Evening, December 20, 1852.

MY DEAR STONE, — Every appearance of brightness! Shall I expect you to-morrow morning? If so, at what hour?

I think of taking train afterwards, and going down for a walk on Chatham lines. If you can spare the day for fresh air and an impromptu bit of fish and chop, I can recommend you one of the most delightful of men for a companion. Oh, he is indeed refreshing!!!

Ever affectionately yours.

CLXXXII. W. H. WILLS

OFFICE OF "HOUSEHOLD WORDS," Christmas Eve, 1852.

MY DEAR WILLS, — I have gone carefully through the number — an awful one for the amount of correction required — and have made everything right. If my mind could have been materialised, and drawn along the tops of all the spikes on the outside of the Queen's Bench prison, it could not have been more agonised than by the ——; which, for imbecility, carelessness, slovenly composition, relatives without antecedents, universal chaos, and one absorbing whirlpool of jolter-headedness, beats anything in print and paper I have ever "gone at" in my life.

I shall come and see how you are to-morrow. Meantime everything is in perfect trim in these parts, and I have sent down to Stacey to come here and top up with a final interview before I go.

Just after I had sent the messenger off to you, yesterday, concerning the toll-taker memoranda, the other idea came into my head, and in the most obliging manner came out of it.

Ever faithfully yours.

P. S. — Here is —— perpetually flitting about Brydges Street, and hovering in the neighbourhood, with a veil of secrecy drawn down over his chin, so ludicrously transparent, that I can't help laughing while he looks at me.

CLXXXIII. G. LINNAEUS BANKS

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, Sunday, December 26, 1852.

MY DEAR SIR, — I will not attempt to tell you how affected and gratified I am by the intelligence [1] your kind letter conveys to me. Nothing would be more welcome to me than such a mark of confidence and approval from such a source, nothing more precious, or that I could set a higher worth upon.

I hasten to return the gauges, of which I have marked one as the size of the finger, from which this token will never more be absent as long as I live.

[1] A proposed public dinner at Birmingham, when Dickens was to be presented with a salver and diamond ring.

With feelings of the liveliest gratitude and cordiality towards the many friends who so honour me, and with many thanks to you for the genial earnestness with which you represent them,

I am, my dear sir, very faithfully yours.

P. S. — Will you do me the favour to inform the dinner committee that a friend of mine, Mr. Clement of Shrewsbury, is very anxious to purchase a ticket for the dinner, and that if they will be so good as to forward one for him to me I shall feel much obliged.

CLXXXIV. CLARKSON STANFIELD

H. M. S. Tavistock, January 2, 1853.

Yoho, old salt! Neptun' ahoy! You don't forget, messmet, as you was to meet Dick Sparkler and Mark Porpuss on the fok'sle of the good ship "Owssel Words," Wednesday next, half-past four? Not you; for when did Stanfell ever pass his word to go anywheers and not come! Well. Belay, my heart of oak, belay! Come alongside the Tavistock same day and hour, 'stead of "Owssel Words." Hail your shipmets, and they 'll drop over the side and join you, like two new shillings a droppin' into the purser's pocket. Damn all lubberly boys and swabs, and give *me* the lad with the tarry trousers, which shines to me like di'mings bright!

CLXXXV. W. C. MACREADY

Tavistock House, Friday Night, January 14, 1853.

My dearest Macready, — I have been much affected by the receipt of your kindest and best of letters; for I know out of the midst of what anxieties it comes to me, and I appreciate such remembrance from my heart. You and yours are always with us, however. It is no new thing for you to have a part in any scene of my life. It very rarely happens that a day passes without our thoughts and conversation travelling to Sherborne. We are so much there that I cannot tell you how plainly I see you as I write.

I know you would have been full of sympathy and approval if you had been present at Birmingham, and that you would have concurred in the tone I tried to take about the eternal

duties of the arts to the people. I took the liberty of putting the court and that kind of thing out of the question, and recognising nothing *but* the arts and the people. The more we see of life and its brevity, and the world and its varieties, the more we know that no exercise of our abilities in any art, but the addressing of it to the great ocean of humanity in which we are drops, and not to by-ponds (very stagnant) here and there, ever can or ever will lay the foundations of an endurable retrospect. Is it not so? *You* should have as much practical information on this subject, now, my dear friend, as any man.

My dearest Macready, I cannot forbear this closing word. I still look forward to our meeting as we used to do in the happy times we have known together, so far as your old hopefulness and energy are concerned. And I think I never in my life have been more glad to receive a sign than I have been to hail that which I find in your handwriting.

Some of your old friends at Birmingham are full of interest and inquiry. Kate and Georgina send their dearest loves to you, and to Miss Macready, and to all the children. I am ever, and no matter where I am, — and quite as much in a crowd as alone, — my dearest Macready,

Your affectionate and most attached friend.

CLXXXVI. MRS. GASKELL

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, May 3, 1853.

MY DEAR MRS. GASKELL, — The subject is certainly NOT too serious, so sensibly treated. I have no doubt that you may do a great deal of good by pursuing it in "Household Words." I thoroughly agree in all you say in your note, have similar reasons for giving it some anxious consideration, and shall be greatly interested in it. Pray decide to do it. Send the papers, as you write them, to me. Meanwhile I will think of a name for them, and bring it to bear upon yours, if I think yours improvable. I am sure you may rely on being widely understood and sympathised with.

Forget that I called those two women my dear friends! Why, if I told you a fiftieth part of what I have thought about them, you would write me the most suspicious of notes, refusing to receive the fiftieth part of that. So I don't write, particularly as you laid your injunctions on me concerning Ruth.

In revenge I will now mention one word that I wish you would take out whenever you reprint that book. She would never — I am ready to make affidavit before any authority in the land — have called her seducer "Sir," when they were living at that hotel in Wales. A girl pretending to be what she really was would have done it, but she — never!

Ever most faithfully yours.

CLXXXVII. MONSIEUR REGNIER [1]

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, Monday, May 9, 1853.

MY DEAR REGNIER, — I meant to have spoken to you last night about a matter in which I hope you can assist me, but I forgot it. I think I must have been quite *bouleversé* by your supposing (as you pretended to do, when you went away) that it was not a great pleasure and delight to me to see you act!

There is a certain Miss Kelly, now sixty-two years old, who was once one of the very best of English actresses, in the greater and better days of the English theatre. She has much need of a benefit, and I am exerting myself to arrange one for her, on about the 9th of June, if possible, at the St. James's Theatre. The first piece will be an entertainment of her own, and she will act in the last. Between these two (and at the best time of the night), it would be a great attraction to the public, and a great proof of friendship to me, if you would act. If we could manage, through your influence and with your assistance, to present a little French vaudeville, such as "*Le bon Homme jadis*," it would make the night a grand success.

Mitchell's permission, I suppose, would be required. That I will undertake to apply for, if you will tell me that you are willing to help us, and that you could answer for the other necessary actors in the little French piece, whatever the piece might be, that you would choose for the purpose. Pray write me a short note in answer, on this point.

I ought to tell you that the benefit will be "under distinguished patronage." The Duke of Devonshire, the Duke of Leinster, the Duke of Beaufort, etc., etc., are members of the committee with me, and I have no doubt that the audience will be of the *élite*.

I have asked Mr. Chapman to come to me to-morrow, to

[1] Of the Théâtre Français.

arrange for the hiring of the theatre. Mr. Harley (a favourite English comedian whom you may know) is our secretary. And if I could assure the committee to-morrow afternoon of your co-operation, I am sure they would be overjoyed.

Votre tout dévoué.

CLXXXVIII. W. H. WILLS

BOULOGNE, Monday, June 13, 1853.

MY DEAR WILLS, — You will be glad, I know, to hear that we had a delightful passage yesterday, and that I made a perfect phenomenon of a dinner. It is raining hard to-day, and my back feels the draught; but I am otherwise still mending.

I have signed, sealed, and delivered a contract for a house (once occupied for two years by a man I knew in Switzerland), which is not a large one, but stands in the middle of a great garden, with what the landlord calls a "forest" at the back, and is now surrounded by flowers, vegetables, and all manner of growth. A queer, odd, French place, but extremely well supplied with all table and other conveniences, and strongly recommended.

The address is:

Château des Moulineaux,
Rue Beaurepaire, Boulogne.

There is a coach-house, stabling for half a dozen horses, and I don't know what.

We take possession this afternoon, and I am now laying in a good stock of creature comforts. So no more at present from

Yours ever faithfully.

P. S. — Mrs. Dickens and her sister unite in kindest regards.

CLXXXIX. THE SAME

CHÂTEAU DES MOULINEAUX, BOULOGNE,
Saturday Night, June 18, 1853.

MY DEAR WILLS, —

"BLEAK HOUSE"

Thank God, I have done half the number with great care, and hope to finish on Thursday or Friday next. O how thank-

ful I feel to be able to have done it, and what a relief to get the number out!

GENERAL MOVEMENTS OF INIMITABLE

I don't think (I am not sure) I shall come to London until after the completion of "Bleak House," No. 18 — the number after this now in hand — for it strikes me that I am better here at present. I have picked up in the most extraordinary manner, and I believe you would never suppose to look at me that I had had that week or barely an hour of it. If there should be any occasion for our meeting in the mean time, a run over here would do you no harm, and we should be delighted to see you at any time. If you suppose this place to be in a street, you are much mistaken. It is in the country, though not more than ten minutes' walk from the post-office, and is the best doll's-house of many rooms, in the prettiest French grounds, in the most charming situation I have ever seen, the best place I have ever lived in abroad, except at Genoa. You can scarcely imagine the beauty of the air in this richly wooded hillside. As to comforts in the house, there are all sorts of things, beginning with no end of the coldest water and running through the most beautiful flowers down to English foot-baths and a Parisian liqueur-stand. Your parcel (frantic inclosures and all) arrived quite safely last night. This will leave by steamer to-morrow, Sunday evening. There is a boat in the morning, but having no one to send to-night I can't reach it, and to-morrow being Sunday it will come to much the same thing.

I think that 's all at present.

Ever, my dear Wills, faithfully yours.

CXC. FRANK STONE, A. R. A.

CHÂTEAU DES MOULINEAUX, RUE BEAUREPAIRE, BOULOGNE,
Thursday, June 23, 1853.

MY DEAR PUMPION, — I take the earliest opportunity, after finishing my number — ahem! — to write you a line, and to report myself (thank God) brown, well, robust, vigorous, open to fight any man in England of my weight, and growing a moustache. Any person of undoubted pluck, in want of a customer, may hear of me at the bar of "Bleak House," where my money is down.

I think there is an abundance of places here that would suit you well enough; and Georgina is ready to launch on voyages of discovery and observation with you. But it is necessary that you should consider for how long a time you want it, as the folks here let much more advantageously for the tenant when they know the term — don't like to let without. It seems to me that the best thing you can do is to get a paper of the South Eastern tidal trains, fix your day for coming over here in five hours (when you will pay through to Boulogne at London Bridge), let me know the day, and come and see how you like the place. *I* like it better than ever. We can give you a bed (two to spare, at a pinch three), and show you a garden and a view or so. The town is not so cheap as places farther off, but you get a great deal for your money, and by far the best wine at tenpence a bottle that I have ever drank anywhere. I really desire no better.

I may mention for your guidance (for I count upon your coming to overhaul the general aspect of things), that you have nothing on earth to do with your luggage when it is once in the boat, *until after you have walked ashore.* That you will be filtered with the rest of the passengers through a hideous, white-washed, quarantine-looking custom-house, where a stern man of a military aspect will demand your passport. That you will have nothing of the sort, but will produce your card with this addition: "Restant à Boulogne, chez M. Charles Dickens, Château des Moulineaux." That you will then be passed out at a little door, like one of the ill-starred prisoners on the bloody September night, into a yelling and shrieking crowd, cleaving the air with the names of the different hotels, exactly seven thousand six hundred and fifty-four in number. And that your heart will be on the point of sinking with dread, then you will find yourself in the arms of the Sparkler of Albion. All unite in kindest regards. Ever affectionately.

P. S. — I thought you might like to see the flourish again.

CXCI. JOHN FORSTER

June 26, 1853.

O the rain here yesterday! A great sea-fog rolling in, a strong wind blowing, and the rain coming down in torrents all

day long. . . . This house is on a great hillside, backed up by woods of young trees. It faces the Haute Ville with the ramparts and the unfinished cathedral — which capital object is exactly opposite the windows. On the slope in front, going steep down to the right, all Boulogne is piled and jumbled about in a very picturesque manner. The view is charming — closed in at last by the tops of swelling hills; and the door is within ten minutes of the post-office, and within quarter of an hour of the sea. The garden is made in terraces up the hillside, like an Italian garden; the top walks being in the beforementioned woods. The best part of it begins at the level of the house, and goes up at the back, a couple of hundred feet perhaps. There are at present thousands of roses all about the house, and no end of other flowers. There are five great summer-houses, and (I think) fifteen fountains — not one of which (according to the invariable French custom) ever plays. The house is a doll's house of many rooms. It is one story high, with eight-and-thirty steps up and down — tribune-wise — to the front door: the noblest French demonstration I have ever seen, I think. It is a double house; and as there are only four windows and a pigeon-hole to be beheld in front, you would suppose it to contain about four rooms. Being built on the hillside, the top story of the house at the back — there are two stories there — opens on the level of another garden. On the ground floor there is a very pretty hall, almost all glass; a little dining-room opening on a beautiful conservatory, which is also looked into through a great transparent glass in a mirror-frame over the chimney-piece, just as in Paxton's room at Chatsworth; a spare bedroom, two little drawing-rooms opening into one another, the family bedrooms, a bathroom, a glass corridor, an open yard, and a kind of kitchen with a machinery of stoves and boilers. Above, there are eight tiny bedrooms all opening on one great room in the roof, originally intended for a billiard-room. In the basement there is an admirable kitchen with every conceivable requisite in it, a noble cellar, first-rate man's room and pantry; coach-house, stable, coal-store and wood-store; and in the garden is a pavilion, containing an excellent spare bedroom on the ground floor. The getting-up of these places, the looking-glasses, clocks, little stoves, all manner of fittings, must be seen to be appreciated. The conservatory is full of choice flowers, and perfectly beautiful.

But the landlord — M. Beaucourt — is wonderful. Everybody here has two surnames (I cannot conceive why), and M. Beaucourt, as he is always called, is by rights M. Beaucourt-Mutuel. He is a portly jolly fellow with a fine open face; lives on the hill behind, just outside the top of the garden; and was a linen-draper in the town, where he still has a shop, but is supposed to have mortgaged his business and to be in difficulties — all along of this place, which he has planted with his own hands; which he cultivates all day; and which he never on any consideration speaks of but as "the Property." He is extraordinarily popular in Boulogne (the people in the shops invariably brightening up at the mention of his name, and congratulating us on being his tenants), and really seems to deserve it. He is such a liberal fellow that I can't bear to ask him for anything, since he instantly supplies it whatever it is. The things he has done in respect of unreasonable bedsteads and washing-stands, I blush to think of. I observed the other day in one of the side gardens — there are gardens at each side of the house too — a place where I thought the Comic Countryman[1] must infallibly trip over, and make a little descent of a dozen feet. So I said, "M. Beaucourt," — who instantly pulled off his cap and stood bareheaded, — "there are some spare pieces of wood lying by the cow-house, if you would have the kindness to have one laid across here I think it would be safer." "Ah, mon Dieu, sir," said M. Beaucourt, "it must be iron. This is not a portion of the property where you would like to see wood." "But iron is so expensive," said I, "and it really is not worth while —" "Sir, pardon me a thousand times," said M. Beaucourt, "it shall be iron. Assuredly and perfectly, it shall be iron." "Then, M. Beaucourt," said I, "I shall be glad to pay a moiety of the cost." "Sir," said M. Beaucourt, "Never!" Then, to change the subject, he slided from his firmness and gravity into a graceful conversational tone, and said, "In the moonlight last night, the flowers on the property appeared, O Heaven, to be *bathing themselves in the sky.* You like the property?" "M. Beaucourt," said I, "I am enchanted with it; I am more than satisfied with everything." "And I, sir," said M. Beaucourt, laying his cap upon his breast, and kissing his hand — "I equally!" Yesterday two blacksmiths came for a day's work, and put up a good solid handsome bit of

[1] A name he was giving just then to his youngest boy.

iron railing, morticed into the stone parapet. . . . If the extraordinary things in the house defy description, the amazing phenomena in the gardens never could have been dreamed of by anybody but a Frenchman bent upon one idea. Besides a portrait of the house in the dining-room, there is a plan of the property in the hall. It looks about the size of Ireland; and to every one of the extraordinary objects, there is a reference with some portentous name. There are fifty-one such references, including the Cottage of Tom Thumb, the Bridge of Austerlitz, the Bridge of Jena, the Hermitage, the Bower of the Old Guard, the Labyrinth (I have no idea which is which); and there is guidance to every room in the house, as if it were a place on that stupendous scale that without such a clue you must infallibly lose your way, and perhaps perish of starvation between bedroom and bedroom.

CXCII. JOHN FORSTER

July 24, 1853.

I may mention that the great Beaucourt daily changes the orthography of this place. He has now fixed it, by having painted up outside the garden gate, "Entrée particulière de la Villa des Moulineaux." On another gate a little higher up, he has had painted "Entrée des Écuries de la Villa des Moulineaux." On another gate a little lower down (applicable to one of the innumerable buildings in the garden), "Entrée du Tom Pouce." On the highest gate of the lot, leading to his own house, "Entrée du Château Napoléonienne." All of which inscriptions you will behold in black and white when you come. I see little of him now, as, all things being "bien arrangées," he is delicate of appearing. His wife has been making a trip in the country during the last three weeks, but as he mentioned to me with his hat in his hand, it was necessary that he should remain here, to be continually at the disposition of the tenant of the Property. (The better to do this, he has had roaring dinner parties of fifteen daily; and the old woman who milks the cows has been fainting up the hill under vast burdens of champagne.)

We went to the theatre last night, to see the "Midsummer Night's Dream" — of the Opéra Comique. It is a beautiful little theatre now, with a very good company; and the nonsense of the piece was done with a sense quite confounding in that

connection. Willy Am Shay Kes Peer; Sirzhon Foll Stayffe; Lor Lattimeer; and that celebrated Maid of Honour to Queen Elizabeth, Mees Oleeveeir — were the principal characters.

Outside the old town, an army of workmen are (and have been for a week or so, already) employed upon an immense building which I supposed might be a Fort, or a Monastery, or a Barrack, or other something designed to last for ages. I find it is for the annual fair, which begins on the fifth of August and lasts a fortnight. Almost every Sunday we have a fête, where there is dancing in the open air, and where immense men with prodigious beards revolve on little wooden horses like Italian irons, in what we islanders call a roundabout, by the hour together. But really the good-humour and cheerfulness are very delightful. Among the other sights of the place, there is a pig-market every Saturday, perfectly insupportable in its absurdity. An excited French peasant, male or female, with a determined young pig, is the most amazing spectacle. I saw a little Drama enacted yesterday week, the drollery of which was perfect. *Dram. Pers.* 1. A pretty young woman with short petticoats and trim blue stockings, riding a donkey with two baskets and a pig in each. 2. An ancient farmer in a blouse, driving four pigs, his four in hand, with an enormous whip — and being drawn against walls and into smoking shops by any one of the four. 3. A cart, with an old pig (manacled) looking out of it, and terrifying six hundred and fifty young pigs in the market by his terrific grunts. 4. Collector of Octroi in an immense cocked hat, with a stream of young pigs running, night and day, between his military boots and rendering accounts impossible. 5. Inimitable, confronted by a radiation of elderly pigs, fastened each by one leg to a bunch of stakes in the ground. 6. John Edmund Reade, poet, expressing eternal devotion to and admiration of Landor, unconscious of approaching pig recently escaped from barrow. 7. Priests, peasants, soldiers, etc., etc.

CXCIII. W. H. WILLS

BOULOGNE, Wednesday, July 27, 1853

MY DEAR WILLS, — I have thought of another article to be called "Frauds upon the Fairies," *à propos* of George Cruikshank's editing. Half playfully and half seriously, I mean to

protest most strongly against alteration, for any purpose, of the beautiful little stories which are so tenderly and humanly useful to us in these times, when the world is too much with us, early and late; and then to re-write "Cinderella" according to Total Abstinence, Peace Society, and Bloomer principles, and expressly for their propagation.

I shall want his book of "Hop o' my Thumb" (Forster noticed it in the last "Examiner"), and the most simple and popular version of "Cinderella" you can get me. I shall not be able to do it until after finishing "Bleak House," but I shall do it the more easily for having the books by me. So send them, if convenient, in your next parcel.

Ever faithfully.

CXCIV. W. H. WILLS

Boulogne, Sunday, 7th August, 1853.

My dear Wills, — Can't possibly write autographs until I have written "Bleak House." My work has been very hard since I have been here; and when I throw down my pen of a day, I throw down myself, and can take up neither article.

The "C. P." is very well done, but I cannot make up my mind to lend my blow to the great Forge-bellows of puffery at work. I so heartily desire to have nothing to do with it, that I wish you would cancel this article altogether, and substitute something else. As to the guide-books, I think they are a sufficiently flatulent botheration in themselves, without being discussed. A lurking desire is always upon me to put Mr. ——'s speech on Accidents to the public, as chairman of the Brighton Railway, against his pretensions as a chairman of public instructors and guardians. And I don't know but that I may come to it at some odd time. This strengthens me in my wish to avoid the bellows.

How two men can have gone, one after the other, to the Camp, and have written nothing about it, passes my comprehension. I have been in great doubt about the end of ——. I wish you would suggest to him from me, when you see him, how wrong it is. Surely he cannot be insensible to the fact that military preparations in England at this time mean Defence. Woman, says ——, means Home, love, children, Mother. Does he not find any protection for these things in a wise and

moderate means of Defence; and is not the union between these things and those means one of the most natural, significant, and plain in the world?

I wish you would send friend Barnard here a set of "Household Words," in a paid parcel (on the other side is an inscription to be neatly pasted into vol. i. before sending), with a post-letter beforehand from yourself, saying that I had begged you to forward the books, feeling so much obliged to him for his uniform attention and politeness. Also that you will not fail to continue his set, as successive volumes appear.

ASPECTS OF NATURE

We have had a tremendous sea here. Steam-packet in the harbour frantic, and dashing her brains out against the stone walls.

Ever faithfully.

CXCV. THE HON. MRS. WATSON

VILLA DES MOULINEAUX, BOULOGNE,
Saturday, August 27, 1853.

MY DEAR MRS. WATSON, — I received your letter — most welcome and full of interest to me — when I was hard at work finishing "Bleak House." We are always talking of you; and I had said but the day before, that one of the first things I would do on my release would be to write to you. To finish the topic of "Bleak House" at once, I will only add that I like the conclusion very much and think it *very pretty indeed.* The story has taken extraordinarily, especially during the last five or six months, when its purpose has been gradually working itself out. It has retained its immense circulation from the first, beating dear old "Copperfield" by a round ten thousand or more. I have never had so many readers. We had a little reading of the final double number here the night before last, and it made a great impression I assure you.

We are all extremely well, and like Boulogne very much indeed. I laid down the rule before we came that we would know nobody here, and we *do* know nobody here. We evaded callers as politely as we could, and gradually came to be understood and left to ourselves. It is a fine bracing air, a beautiful

open country, and an admirable mixture of town and country. We live on a green hillside out of the town, but are in the town (on foot) in ten minutes. Things are tolerably cheap, and exceedingly good; the people very cheerful, good-looking, and obliging; the houses very clean; the distance to London short, and easily traversed. I think if you came to know the place (which I never did myself until last October, often as I have been through it), you could be but in one mind about it.

Charley is still at Leipzig. I shall take him up somewhere on the Rhine, to bring him home for Christmas, as I come back on my own little tour. He has been in the Hartz Mountains on a walking-tour, and has written a journal thereof, which he has sent home in portions. It has cost about as much in postage as would have bought a pair of ponies.

I contemplate starting from here on Monday, the 10th of October; Catherine, Georgina, and the rest of them will then go home. I shall go first by Paris and Geneva to Lausanne, for it has a separate place in my memory. If the autumn should be very fine (just possible after such a summer), I shall then go by Chamounix and Martigny, over the Simplon to Milan, thence to Genoa, Leghorn, Pisa, and Naples, thence, I hope, to Sicily. Back by Bologna, Florence, Rome, Verona, Mantua, etc., to Venice, and home by Germany, arriving in good time for Christmas Day. Three nights in Christmas week, I have promised to read in the Town Hall at Birmingham, for the benefit of a new and admirable institution for working men projected there. The Friday will be the last night, and I shall read the "Carol" to two thousand working people, stipulating that they shall have that night entirely to themselves.

It just occurs to me that I mean to engage, for the two months odd, a travelling servant. I have not yet got one. If you should happen to be interested in any good foreigner, well acquainted with the countries and the languages, who would like such a master, how delighted I should be to like *him!*

Ever since I have been here, I have been very hard at work, often getting up at daybreak to write through many hours. I have never had the least return of illness, thank God, though I was so altered (in a week) when I came here, that I doubt if you would have known me. I am redder and browner than ever at the present writing, with the addition of a rather formidable and fierce moustache. Lowestoft I know, by walking

over there from Yarmouth, when I went down on an exploring expedition, previous to "Copperfield." It is a fine place. I saw the name "Blunderstone" on a direction-post between it and Yarmouth, and took it from the said direction-post for the book. We imagined the Captain's ecstasies when we saw the birth of his child in the papers. In some of the descriptions of Chesney Wold, I have taken many bits, chiefly about trees and shadows, from observations made at Rockingham. I wonder whether you have ever thought so! I shall hope to hear from you again soon, and shall not fail to write again before I go away. There seems to be nothing but "I" in this letter; but "I" know, my dear friend, that you will be more interested in that letter in the present connection than in any other I could take from the alphabet.

Catherine and Georgina send their kindest loves, and more messages than this little sheet would hold. If I were to give you a hint of what we feel at the sight of your handwriting, and at the receipt of a word from yourself about yourself, and the dear boys, and the precious little girls, I should begin to be sorrowful, which is rather the tendency of my mind at the close of another long book. I heard from Cerjat two or three days since. Goff, by the bye, lived in this house two years.

Ever, my dear Mrs. Watson,

Yours, with true affection and regard.

CXCVI. PETER CUNNINGHAM

Château des Moulineaux, Rue Beaurepaire, Boulogne.

My dear Cunningham, — A note — Cerberus-like — of three heads.

First. I know you will be glad to hear that the manager is himself again. Vigorous, brown, energetic, muscular; the pride of Albion and the admiration of Gaul.

Secondly. I told Wills when I left home, that I was quite pained to see the end of your excellent "Bowl of Punch" altered. I was unaffectedly touched and gratified by the heartiness of the original; and saw no earthly, celestial, or subterranean objection to its remaining, as it did not so unmistakably apply to me as to necessitate the observance of my usual precaution in the case of such references, by any means.

Thirdly. If you ever have a holiday that you don't know

what to do with, *do* come and pass a little time here. We live in a charming garden in a very pleasant country, and should be delighted to receive you. Excellent light wines on the premises, French cookery, millions of roses, two cows (for milk punch), vegetables, cut for the pot, and handed in at the kitchen window; five summer-houses, fifteen fountains (with no water in 'em), and thirty-seven clocks (keeping, as I conceive, Australian time; having no reference whatever to the hours on this side of the globe).

I know, my dear Cunningham, that the British nation can ill afford to lose you; and that when the Audit Office mice are away, the cats of that great public establishment will play. But pray consider that the bow may be sometimes bent too long, and that over-arduous application, even in patriotic service, is to be avoided. No one can more highly estimate your devotion to the best interests of Britain than I. But I wish to see it tempered with a wise consideration for your own amusement, recreation, and pastime. All work and no play may make Peter a dull boy as well as Jack. And (if I may claim the privilege of friendship to remonstrate) I would say that you do not take enough time for your meals. Dinner, for instance, you habitually neglect. Believe me, this rustic repose will do you good. Winkles also are to be obtained in these parts, and it is well remarked by Poor Richard, that a bird in the hand-book is worth two in the bush.

Ever cordially yours.

CXCVII. WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, LONDON, September 8, 1853.

MY DEAR LANDOR, — I am in town for a day or two, and Forster tells me I may now write to thank you for the happiness you have given me by honouring my name with such generous mention, on such a noble place, in your great book. I believe he has told you already that I wrote to him from Boulogne, not knowing what to do, as I had not received the precious volume, and feared you might have some plan of sending it to me, with which my premature writing would interfere.

You know how heartily and inexpressibly I prize what you have written to me, or you never would have selected me for

such a distinction. I could never thank you enough, my dear Landor, and I will not thank you in words any more. Believe me, I receive the dedication like a great dignity, the worth of which I hope I thoroughly know. The Queen could give me none in exchange that I would n't laughingly snap my fingers at.

We are staying at Boulogne until the 10th of October, when I go into Italy until Christmas, and the rest come home.

Kate and Georgina would send you their best loves if they were here, and would never leave off talking about it if I went back and told them I had written to you without such mention of them. Walter is a very good boy, and comes home from school with honourable commendation. He passed last Sunday in solitary confinement (in a bathroom) on bread and water, for terminating a dispute with the nurse by throwing a chair in her direction. It is the very first occasion of his ever having got into trouble, for he is a great favourite with the whole house, and one of the most amiable boys in the boy world. (He comes out on birthdays in a blaze of shirt-pin.)

If I go and look at your old house, as I shall if I go to Florence, I shall bring you back another leaf from the same tree as I plucked the last from.

Ever, my dear Landor,

Heartily and affectionately yours.

CXCVIII. JOHN DELANE [1]

VILLA DES MOULINEAUX, BOULOGNE,
Monday, September 12, 1853.

MY DEAR DELANE, — I am very much obliged to you, I assure you, for your frank and full reply to my note. Nothing could be more satisfactory, and I have to-day seen Mr. Gibson and placed my two small representatives under his charge. His manner is exactly what you describe him. I was greatly pleased with his genuineness altogether.

We remain here until the tenth of next month, when I am going to desert my wife and family and run about Italy until Christmas. If I can execute any little commission for you or Mrs. Delane — in the Genoa street of silversmiths, or anywhere else — I shall be delighted to do so. I have been in the receipt of several letters from Macready lately, and rejoice to find him

[1] Editor of *The Times*.

quite himself again, though I have great misgivings that he will lose his eldest boy before he can be got to India.

Mrs. Dickens and her sister are proud of your message, and beg their kind regards to be forwarded in return; my other half being particularly comforted and encouraged by your account of Mr. Gibson. In this charge I am to include Mrs. Delane, who, I hope, will make an exchange of remembrances, and give me hers for mine.

I never saw anything so ridiculous as this place at present. They expected the Emperor ten or twelve days ago, and put up all manner of triumphal arches made of evergreens, which look like tea-leaves now, and will take a withered and weird appearance hardly to be foreseen, long before the twenty-fifth, when the visit is vaguely expected to come off. In addition to these faded garlands all over the leading streets, there are painted eagles hoisted over gateways and sprawling across a hundred ways, which have been washed out by the rain and are now being blistered by the sun, until they look horribly ludicrous. And a number of our benighted compatriots who came over to see a perfect blaze of *fêtes*, go wandering among these shrivelled preparations and staring at ten thousand flag-poles without any flags upon them, with a kind of indignant curiosity and personal injury quite irresistible. With many thanks,

Very faithfully yours.

CXCIX. W. H. WILLS

BOULOGNE, Sunday, September 18, 1853.

MY DEAR WILLS, —

(COURIER)

Edward Kaub will bring this. He turned up yesterday, accounting for his delay by waiting for a written recommendation, and having at the last moment (as a foreigner, not being an Englishman) a passport to get. I quite agree with you as to his appearance and manner, and have engaged him. It strikes me that it would be an excellent beginning if you would deliver him a neat and appropriate address, telling him what in your conscience you can find to tell of me favourably as a master, and particularly impressing upon him *readiness and punctuality* on his part as the great things to be observed. I think it would have a much better effect than anything I could say in this stage,

if said from yourself. But I shall be much obliged to you if you will act upon this hint forthwith.

W. H. WILLS

No letter having arrived from the popular author of "The Larboard Fin,"[1] by this morning's post, I rather think one must be on the way in the pocket of Gordon's son. If Kaub calls for this before young Scotland arrives, you will understand if I do not herein refer to an unreceived letter. But I shall leave this open, until Kaub comes for it.

Ever faithfully.

CC. THE LORD JOHN RUSSELL

VILLA DES MOULINEAUX, BOULOGNE,
Wednesday, September 21, 1853.

MY DEAR LORD, — Your note having been forwarded to me here, I cannot forbear thanking you with all my heart for your great kindness. Mr. Forster had previously sent me a copy of your letter to him, together with the expression of the high and lasting gratification he had in your handsome response. I know he feels it most sincerely.

I became the prey of a perfect spasm of sensitive twinges, when I found that the close of "Bleak House" had not penetrated to "the wilds of the North" when your letter left those parts. I was so very much interested in it myself when I wrote it here last month, that I have a fond sort of faith in its interesting its readers. But for the hope that you may have got it by this time, I should refuse comfort. That supports me.

The book has been a wonderful success. Its audience enormous.

I fear there is not much chance of my being able to execute any little commission for Lady John anywhere in Italy. But I am going across the Alps, leaving here on the tenth of next month, and returning home to London for Christmas Day, and should indeed be happy if I could do her any dwarf service.

You will be interested, I think, to hear that Poole lives happily on his pension, and lives within it. He is quite incapable of any mental exertion, and what he would have done without it I cannot imagine. I send it to him at Paris every

[1] Meaning Mr. W. H. Wills himself.

quarter. It is something even amid the estimation in which you are held, which is but a foreshadowing of what shall be by and by, as the people advance, to be so gratefully remembered as he, with the best reason, remembers you. Forgive my saying this. But the manner of that transaction, no less than the matter, is always fresh in my memory in association with your name, and I cannot help it.

My dear Lord,

Yours very faithfully and obliged.

CCI. THE HON. MRS. WATSON

Boulogne, Wednesday, September 21, 1853.

My dear Mrs. Watson, — The courier was unfortunately engaged. He offered to recommend another, but I had several applicants, and begged Mr. Wills to hold a grand review at the "Household Words" office and select the man who is to bring me down as his victim. I am extremely sorry the man you recommend was not to be had. I should have been so delighted to take him.

I am finishing "The Child's History," and clearing the way through "Household Words," in general, before I go on my trip. I forget whether I told you that Mr. Egg the painter and Mr. Collins are going with me. The other day I was in town. In case you should not have heard of the condition of that deserted village, I think it worth mentioning. All the streets of any note were unpaved, mountains high, and all the omnibuses were sliding down alleys, and looking into the upper windows of small houses. At eleven o'clock one morning I was positively *alone* in Bond Street. I went to one of my tailors, and he was at Brighton. A smutty-faced woman among some gorgeous regimentals, half finished, had not the least idea when he would be back. I went to another of my tailors, and he was in an upper room, with open windows and surrounded by mignonette boxes, playing the piano in the bosom of his family. I went to my hosier's, and two of the least presentable of "the young men" of that elegant establishment were playing at draughts in the back shop. (Likewise I beheld a porter-pot hastily concealed under a Turkish dressing-gown of a golden pattern.) I then went wandering about to look for some ingenious portmanteau, and near the corner of St. James's Street

saw a solitary being sitting in a trunk-shop, absorbed in a book which, on a close inspection, I found to be "Bleak House." I thought this looked well, and went in. And he really was more interested in seeing me, when he knew who I was, than any face I had seen in any house, every house I knew being occupied by painters, including my own. I went to the Athenæum that same night, to get my dinner, and it was shut up for repairs. I went home late, and had forgotten the key and was locked out.

Preparations were made here, about six weeks ago, to receive the Emperor, who is not come yet. Meanwhile our countrymen (deluded in the first excitement) go about staring at these arrangements, with a personal injury upon them which is most ridiculous. And they *will* persist in speaking an unknown tongue to the French people, who *will* speak English to them.

Kate and Georgina send their kindest loves. We are all quite well. Going to drop two small boys here, at school with a former Eton tutor highly recommended to me. Charley was heard of a day or two ago. He says his professor "is very short-sighted, always in green spectacles, always drinking weak beer, always smoking a pipe, and always at work." The last qualification seems to appear to Charley the most astonishing one.

Ever, my dear Mrs. Watson,
Most affectionately yours.

CCII. MRS. CHARLES DICKENS

HÔTEL DE LONDRES, CHAMOUNIX,
Thursday Night, October 20, 1853.

MY DEAREST KATE, — We[1] came here last night after a very long journey over very bad roads, from Geneva, and leave here (for Martigny, by the Tête Noire) at six to-morrow morning. Next morning early we mean to try the Simplon.

After breakfast to-day we ascended to the Mer de Glace — wonderfully different at this time of the year from when we saw it — a great portion of the ascent being covered with snow, and the climbing very difficult. Regardless of my mule, I walked up and walked down again, to the great admiration of

[1] Charles Dickens, Mr. Wilkie Collins, Mr. Augustus Egg, and Edward the courier.

the guides, who pronounced me "an Intrepid." The little house at the top being closed for the winter, and Edward having forgotten to carry any brandy, we had nothing to drink at the top — which was a considerable disappointment to the Inimitable, who was streaming with perspiration from head to foot. But we made a fire in the snow with some sticks, and after a not too comfortable rest came down again. It took a long time — from ten to three.

The appearance of Chamounix at this time of year is very remarkable. The travellers are over for the season, the inns are generally shut up, all the people who can afford it are moving off to Geneva, the snow is low on the mountains, and the general desolation and grandeur extraordinarily fine. I wanted to pass by the Col de Balme, but the snow lies too deep upon it.

You would have been quite delighted if you could have seen the warmth of our old Lausanne friends, and the heartiness with which they crowded down on a fearfully bad morning to see us off. We passed the night at the Ecu de Genève, in the rooms once our old rooms — at that time (the day before yesterday) occupied by the Queen of the French (ex- I mean) and Prince Joinville and his family.

Tell Sydney that all the way here from Geneva, and up to the Sea of Ice this morning, I wore his knitting, which was very comfortable indeed. I mean to wear it on the long mule journey to Martigny to-morrow.

We get on extremely well. Edward continues as before. He had never been here, and I took him up to the Mer de Glace this morning, and had a mule for him.

I shall leave this open, as usual, to add a word or two on our arrival at Martigny. We have had an amusingly absurd incident this afternoon. When we came here, I saw added to the hotel — our old hotel, and I am now writing in the room where we once dined at the table d'hôte — some baths, cold and hot, down on the margin of the torrent below. This induced us to order three hot baths. Thereupon the keys of the bathrooms were found with immense difficulty, women ran backwards and forwards across the bridge, men bore in great quantities of wood, a horrible furnace was lighted, and a smoke was raised which filled the whole valley. This began at half-past three, and we congratulated each other on the distinction we should probably

acquire by being the cause of the conflagration of the whole village. We sat by the fire until half-past five (dinner-time), and still no baths. Then Edward came up to say that the water was as yet only "tippit," which we suppose to be tepid, but that by half-past eight it would be in a noble state. Ever since the smoke has poured forth in enormous volume, and the furnace has blazed, and the women have gone and come over the bridge, and piles of wood have been carried in; but we observe a general avoidance of us by the establishment which still looks like failure. We have had a capital dinner, the dessert whereof is now on the table. When we arrived, at nearly seven last night, all the linen in the house, newly washed, was piled in the sitting-room, all the curtains were taken down, and all the chairs piled bottom upwards. They cleared away as much as they could directly, and had even got the curtains up at breakfast this morning.

I am looking forward to letters at Genoa, though I doubt if we shall get there (supposing all things right at the Simplon) before Monday night or Tuesday morning. I found there last night what F—— would call "Mr. Smith's" story of Mont Blanc, and took it to bed to read. It is extremely well and unaffectedly done. You would be interested in it.

MARTIGNY, Friday Afternoon, October 21.

Safely arrived here after a most delightful day, without a cloud. I walked the whole way. The scenery most beautifully presented. We are in the hotel where our old St. Bernard party assembled.

I should like to see you all very much indeed.

Ever affectionately.

CCIII. MRS. CHARLES DICKENS

HÔTEL DE LA VILLE, MILAN, 25th October, 1853.

MY DEAREST CATHERINE, — The road from Chamounix here takes so much more time than I supposed (for I travelled it day and night, and my companions don't at all understand the idea of never going to bed) that we only reached Milan last night, though we had been travelling twelve and fifteen hours a day. We crossed the Simplon on Sunday, when there was not (as there is not now) a particle of cloud in the whole

sky, and when the pass was as nobly grand and beautiful as it possibly can be. There was a good deal of snow upon the top, but not across the road, which had been cleared. We crossed the Austrian frontier yesterday, and, both there and at the gate of Milan, received all possible consideration and politeness.

I have not seen Bairr yet. He has removed from the old hotel to a larger one at a few hours' distance. The head waiter remembered me very well last night after I had talked to him a little while, and was greatly interested in hearing about all the family, and about poor Roche. The boy we used to have at Lausanne is now seventeen and a half — very tall, he says. The elder girl, fifteen, very like her mother, but taller and more beautiful. He described poor Mrs. Bairr's death (I am speaking of the head waiter before mentioned) in most vivacious Italian. It was all over in ten minutes, he said. She put her hands to her head one day, down in the courtyard, and cried out that she heard little bells ringing violently in her ears. They sent off for Bairr, who was close by. When she saw him, she stretched out her arms, said in English, "Adieu, my dear!" and fell dead. He has not married again, and he never will. She was a good woman (my friend went on), excellent woman, full of charity, loved the poor, but *un poco furiosa* — that was nothing!

The new hotel is just like the old one, admirably kept, excellently furnished, and a model of comfort. I hope to be at Genoa on Thursday morning, and to find your letter there. We have agreed to drop Sicily, and to return home by way of Marseilles. Our projected time for reaching London is the 10th of December.

As this house is full, I dare say we shall meet some one we know at the table d'hôte to-day. It is extraordinary that the only travellers we have encountered, since we left Paris, have been one horribly vapid Englishman and wife whom we dropped at Basle, one boring Englishman whom we found (and, thank God, left) at Geneva, and two English maiden ladies, whom we found sitting on a rock (with parasols) the day before yesterday, in the most magnificent part of the Gorge of Gondo, the most awful portion of the Simplon — there awaiting their travelling chariot, in which, with their money, their parasols, and a perfect shop of baskets, they were carefully *locked up* by an English

servant in sky blue and silver buttons. We have been in the most extraordinary vehicles — like swings, like boats, like Noah's arks, like barges and enormous bedsteads. After dark last night, a landlord, where we changed horses, discovered that the luggage would certainly be stolen from *questo porco d' uno carro* — this pig of a cart — his complimentary description of our carriage, unless cords were attached to each of the trunks, which cords were to hang down so that we might hold them in our hands all the way and feel any tug that might be made at our treasures. You will imagine the absurdity of our jolting along some twenty miles in this way, exactly as if we were in three shower-baths and were afraid to pull the string.

We are going to the Scala to-night, having got the old box belonging to the hotel, the old key of which is lying beside me on the table. There seem to be no singers of note here now, and it appears for the time to have fallen off considerably. I shall now bring this to a close, hoping that I may have more interesting jottings to send you about the old scenes and people, from Genoa, where we shall stay two days. You are now, I take it, at Macready's. I shall be greatly interested by your account of your visit there. We often talk of you all.

Edward's Italian is (I fear) very weak. When we began to get really into the language, he reminded me of poor Roche in Germany. But he seems to have picked up a little this morning. He has been unfortunate with the unlucky Egg, leaving a pair of his shoes (his favourite shoes) behind in Paris, and his flannel dressing-gown yesterday morning at Domo d' Ossola. In all other respects he is just as he was.

Egg and Collins have gone out to kill the lions here, and I take advantage of their absence to write to you, Georgie, and Miss Coutts. Wills will have told you, I dare say, that Cerjat accompanied us on a miserably wet morning, in a heavy rain, down the lake. By the bye, the wife of one of his cousins, born in France of German parents, living in the next house to Haldimand's, is one of the most charming, natural, open-faced, and delightful women I ever saw. Madame de —— is set up as the great attraction of Lausanne; but this capital creature shuts her up altogether. We have called her (her — the real belle), ever since, the early-closing movement.

I am impatient for letters from home; confused ideas are

upon me that you are going to White's, but I have no notion when.

Take care of yourself, and God bless you.

Ever most affectionately.

CCIV. MISS HOGARTH

HOTEL DE LA VILLA, MILAN, Tuesday, October 25, 1853.

MY DEAR GEORGY, — I have walked to that extent in Switzerland (walked over the Simplon on Sunday, as an addition to the other feats) that one pair of the new strong shoes has gone to be mended this morning, and the other is in but a poor way; the snow having played the mischief with them.

On the Swiss side of the Simplon, we slept at the beastliest little town, in the wildest kind of house, where some fifty cats tumbled into the corridor outside our bedrooms all at once in the middle of the night — whether through the roof or not, I don't know; for it was dark when we got up — and made such a horrible and terrific noise that we started out of our beds in a panic. I strongly objected to opening the door lest they should get into the room and tear at us; but Edward opened his, and laid about him until he dispersed them. At Domo d' Ossola we had three immense bedrooms (Egg's bed twelve feet wide!), and a sala of imperceptible extent in the dim light of two candles and a wood fire; but were very well and very cheaply entertained. Here, we are, as you know, housed in the greatest comfort.

We continue to get on very well together. We really do admirably. I lose no opportunity of inculcating the lesson that it is of no use to be out of temper in travelling, and it is very seldom wanted for any of us. Egg is an excellent fellow, and full of good qualities; I am sure a generous and stanch man at heart, and a good and honourable nature.

I shall send Catherine from Genoa a list of the places where letters will find me. I shall hope to hear from you too, and shall be very glad indeed to do so. No more at present.

Ever affectionately.

CCV. MISS HOGARTH

CROCE DI MALTA, GENOA, Saturday, October 29, 1853.

MY DEAREST GEORGY, — We had thirty-one hours consecutively on the road between this and Milan, and arrived here in a rather damaged condition. We live at the top of this immense house, overlooking the port and sea, pleasantly and airily enough, though it is no joke to get so high, and though the apartment is rather vast and faded.

The old walks are pretty much the same as ever, except that they have built behind the Peschiere on the San Bartolomeo Hill, and changed the whole town towards San Pietro d'Arena, where we seldom went. The Bisagno looks just the same, strong just now, and very little water in it. Vicoli stink exactly as they used to, and are fragrant with the same old flavour of very rotten cheese kept in very hot blankets. The Mezzaro pervades them as before. The old Jesuit college in the Strada Nuova is under the present government the Hôtel de Ville, and a very splendid caffe with a terrace garden has arisen between it and Palavicini's old palace. Another new and handsome caffe has been built in the Piazza Carlo Felice, between the old caffe of the Bei Arti (where Fletcher stopped for the bouquets in the green times, when we went to the ——'s party) and the Strada Carlo Felice. The old beastly gate and guard-house on the Albaro road are still in their dear old beastly state, and the whole of that road is just as it was. The man without legs is still in the Strada Nuova; but the beggars in general are all cleared off, and our old one-armed Belisario made a sudden evaporation a year or two ago. I am going to the Peschiere to-day. The puppets are here, and the opera is open, but only with a buffo company, and without a buffet. We went to the Scala, where they did an opera of Verdi's, called "Il Trovatore," and a poor enough ballet. The whole performance miserable indeed. I wish you were here to take some of the old walks. It is quite strange to walk about alone. Good-bye, my dear Georgy. Pray tell me how Kate is. I rather fancy from her letter, though I scarcely know why, that she is not quite as well as she was at Boulogne. I was charmed with your account of the Plornishghenter and everything and everybody else. Kiss them all for me. Ever most affectionately yours.

CCVI. MRS. CHARLES DICKENS

CROCE DI MALTA, GENOA, Saturday Night, October 29, 1853.

MY DEAREST CATHERINE, — As we arrived here later than I had expected (in consequence of the journey from Milan being most horribly slow), I received your welcome letter only this morning. I write this before going to bed, that I may be sure of not being taken by any engagement off the post-time to-morrow.

We came in last night between seven and eight. The railroad to Turin is finished and opened to within twenty miles of Genoa. Its effect upon the whole town, and especially upon that part of it lying down beyond the lighthouse and away by San Pietro d' Arena, is quite wonderful. I only knew the place by the lighthouse, so numerous were the new buildings, so wide the streets, so busy the people, and so thriving and busy the many signs of commerce. To-day I have seen ——, the ——, the ——, and the ——, the latter of whom live at Nervi, fourteen or fifteen miles off, towards Porto Fino. First, of the ——. They are just the same, except that Mrs. ——'s face is larger and fuller, and her hair rather grey. As I rang at their bell she came out walking, and stared at me. "What! you don't know me?" said I; upon which she recognised me very warmly, and then said in her old quiet way: "I expected to find a ruin. We heard you had been so ill; and I find you younger and better-looking than ever. But it's so strange to see you without a bright waistcoat. Why haven't you got a bright waistcoat on?" I apologised for my black one, and was sent up stairs, when —— presently appeared in a hideous and demoniacal nightdress, having turned out of bed to greet his distinguished countryman. After a long talk, in the course of which I arranged to dine there on Sunday early, before starting by the steamer for Naples, and in which they told me every possible and impossible particular about their minutest affairs, and especially about ——'s marriage, I set off for ——, at ——. I had found letters from him here, and he had been here over and over again, and had driven out no end of times to the Gate to leave messages for me, and really is (in his strange uncouth way) crying glad to see me. I found him and his wife in a little comfortable country house, overlooking the

sea, sitting in a small summer-house on wheels, exactly like a bathing-machine. I found her rather pretty, extraordinarily cold and composed, a mere piece of furniture, *talking broken English*. Through eight months in the year they live in this country place. She never reads, never works, never talks, never gives an order or directs anything, has only a taste for going to the theatre (where she never speaks either) and buying clothes. They sit in the garden all day, dine at four, *smoke their cigars*, go in at eight, sit about till ten, and then go to bed. The greater part of this I had from —— himself in a particularly unintelligible confidence in the garden, the only portion of which that I could clearly understand were the words "and one thing and another," repeated one hundred thousand times. He described himself as being perfectly happy, and seemed very fond of his wife. "But that," said —— to me this morning, looking like the figure-head of a ship, with a nutmeg-grater for a face, "that he ought to be, and must be, and is bound to be — he could n't help it."

Then I went on to the ——'s, and found them living in a beautiful situation in a ruinous Albaro-like palace. Coming upon them unawares, I found ——, with a pointed beard, smoking a great German pipe, in a pair of slippers; the two little girls very pale and faint from the climate, in a singularly untidy state — one (heaven knows why!) without stockings, and both with their little short hair cropped in a manner never before beheld, and a little bright bow stuck on the top of it. —— said she had invented this head-gear as a picturesque thing, adding that perhaps it was — and perhaps it was not. She was greatly flushed and agitated, but looked very well, and seems to be greatly liked here. We had disturbed her at her painting in oils, and I rather received an impression that, what with that, and what with music, the household affairs went a little to the wall. —— was teaching the two little girls the multiplication table in a disorderly old billiard-room with all manner of maps in it.

Having obtained a gracious permission from the lady of the school, I am going to show my companions the Sala of the Peschiere this morning. It is raining intensely hard in the regular Genoa manner, so that I can hardly hope for Genoa's making as fine an impression as I could desire. Our boat for Naples is a large French mail-boat, and we hope to get there on Tues-

day or Wednesday. If the day after you receive this you write to the Poste Restante, Rome, it will be the safest course. Friday's letter write Poste Restante, Florence. You refer to a letter you suppose me to have received from Forster — to whom my love. No letter from him has come to hand.

I will resume my report of this place in my next. In the mean time, I will not fail to drink dear Katey's health to-day. Edward has just come in with mention of an English boat on Tuesday morning, superior to French boat to-morrow, and faster. I shall inquire at —— and take the best. When I next write I will give you our route in detail.

I am pleased to hear of Mr. Robson's success in a serious part, as I hope he will now be a fine actor. I hope you will enjoy yourself at Macready's, though I fear it must be sometimes but a melancholy visit.

Good-bye, my dear, and believe me ever most affectionately.

Sunday, 30th October.

We leave for Naples to-morrow morning by the Peninsular and Oriental Company's steamer the Valletta. I send a sketch of our movements that I have at last been able to make.

Mrs. —— quite came out yesterday. So did Mrs. —— (in a different manner), by violently attacking Mrs. —— for painting ill in oils when she might be playing well on the piano. It rained hard all yesterday, but is finer this morning. We went over the Peschiere in the wet afternoon. The garden is sorely neglected now, and the rooms are all full of boarding-school beds, and most of the fireplaces are closed up, but the old beauty and grandeur of the place were in it still.

This will find you, I suppose, at Sherborne. My heartiest love to dear Macready, and to Miss Macready, and to all the house. I hope my godson has not forgotten me.

I will think of Charley (from whom I have heard here) and soon write to him definitely. At present I think he had better join me at Boulogne. I shall not bring the little boys over, as, if we keep our time, it would be too long before Christmas Day.

With love to Georgy, ever most affectionately yours.

CCVII. MRS. CHARLES DICKENS

HOTEL DES ETRANGERS, NAPLES,
Friday Night, November 4, 1853.

MY DEAREST CATHERINE, — We arrived here at midday — two days after our intended time, under circumstances which I reserve for Georgina's letter, by way of variety — in what Forster used to call good health and sp—p—pirits. We have a charming apartment opposite the sea, a little lower down than the Victoria — in the direction of the San Carlo Theatre — and the windows are now wide open as on an English summer night. The first persons we found on board at Genoa were Emerson Tennent, Lady Tennent, their son and daughter. They are all here too, in an apartment over ours, and we have all been constantly together in a very friendly way, ever since our meeting. We dine at the table d'hôte — made a league together on board — and have been mutually agreeable. They have no servant with them, and have profited by Edward. He goes on perfectly well, is always cheerful and ready, has been sleeping on board (upside down, I believe), in a corner, with his head in the wet and his heels against the side of the paddle-box — but has been perpetually gay and fresh.

As soon as we got our luggage from the custom-house, we packed complete changes in a bag, set off in a carriage for some warm baths, and had a most refreshing cleansing after our long journey. There was an old Neapolitan attendant — a steady old man — who, bringing the linen into my bath, proposed to "soap me." Upon which I called out to the other two that I intended to have everything done to me that could be done, and gave him directions accordingly. I was frothed all over with Naples soap, rubbed all down, scrubbed with a brush, had my nails cut, and all manner of extraordinary operations performed. He was as much disappointed (apparently) as surprised not to find me dirty, and kept on ejaculating under his breath, "O Heaven! how clean this Englishman is!" He also remarked that the Englishman is as fair as a beautiful woman. Some relations of Lord John Russell's, going to Malta, were aboard-ship, and we were very pleasant. Likewise there was a Mr. Young aboard — an agreeable fellow, not very unlike Forster in person — who introduced himself as the brother of the Miss

Youngs whom we knew at Boulogne. He was musical and had much good-fellowship in him, and we were very agreeable together also. On the whole, I became decidedly popular, and was embraced on all hands when I came over the side this morning. We are going up Vesuvius, of course, and to Herculaneum and Pompeii, and the usual places. The Tennents will be our companions in most of our excursions, but we shall leave them here behind us. Naples looks just the same as when we left it, except that the weather is much better and brighter.

On the day before we left Genoa, we had another dinner with —— at his country place. He was the soul of hospitality, and really seems to love me. You would have been quite touched if you could have seen the honest warmth of his affection. On the occasion of this second banquet, Egg made a brilliant mistake that perfectly convulsed us all. I had introduced all the games with great success, and we were playing at the "What advice would you have given that person?" game. The advice was "Not to bully his fellow creatures." Upon which Egg triumphantly, and with the greatest glee, screamed, "Mr. ——!" utterly forgetting ——'s relationship, which I had elaborately impressed upon him. The effect was perfectly irresistible and uncontrollable; and the little woman's way of humouring the joke was in the best taste and the best sense. While I am upon Genoa I may add, that when we left the Croce the landlord, in hoping that I was satisfied, told me that as I was an old inhabitant he had charged the prices "as to a Genoese." They certainly were very reasonable.

Mr. and Mrs. Sartoris have lately been staying in this house, but are just gone. It is kept by an English waiting-maid who married an Italian courier, and is extremely comfortable and clean. I am getting impatient to hear from you with all home news, and shall be heartily glad to get to Rome, and find my best welcome and interest at the post-office there.

That ridiculous —— and her mother were at the hotel at Leghorn the day before yesterday, where the mother (poor old lady!) was so ill from the fright and anxiety consequent on her daughter's efforts at martyrdom, that it is even doubtful whether she will recover. I learnt from a lady friend of ——, that all this nonsense originated at Nice, where she was stirred up by Free Kirk parsons — itinerant — any one of whom I take her to be ready to make a semi-celestial marriage with. The dear

being who told me all about her was a noble specimen — single, forty, in a clinging flounced black silk dress, which would n't drape, or bustle, or fall, or do anything of that sort — and with a leghorn hat on her head, at least (I am serious) *six feet round*. The consequence of its immense size was, that whereas it had an insinuating blue decoration in the form of a bow in front, it was so out of her knowledge behind that it was all battered and bent in that direction — and, viewed from that quarter, she looked drunk.

My best love to Mamey and Katey, and Sydney the king of the nursery, and Harry and the dear little Plornishghenter. I kiss almost all the children I encounter in remembrance of their sweet faces, and talk to all the mothers who carry them. I hope to hear nothing but good news from you, and to find nothing but good spirits in your expected letter when I come to Rome. I already begin to look homeward, being now at the remotest part of the journey, and to anticipate the pleasure of return.

Ever most affectionately.

CCVIII. MISS HOGARTH

HÔTEL DES ETRANGERS, NAPLES,
Friday Night, November 4, 1853.

MY DEAREST GEORGY, — Instead of embarking on Monday at Genoa, we were delayed (in consequence of the boat's being a day later when there are thirty-one days in the month) until Tuesday. Going aboard that morning at half-past nine, we found the steamer more than full of passengers from Marseilles, and in a state of confusion not to be described. We could get no places at the table, got our dinners how we could on deck, had no berths or sleeping accommodation of any kind, and had paid heavy first-class fares! To add to this, we got to Leghorn too late to steam away again that night, getting the ship's papers examined first — as the authorities said so, not being favourable to the new express English ship, English officered — and we lay off the lighthouse all night long. The scene on board beggars description. Ladies on the tables, gentlemen under the tables, and ladies and gentlemen lying indiscriminately on the open deck, arrayed like spoons on a sideboard. No mattresses, no blankets, nothing. Towards midnight, at-

tempts were made by means of an awning and flags to make this latter scene remotely approach an Australian encampment; and we three lay together on the bare planks covered with overcoats. We were all gradually dozing off when a perfectly tropical rain fell, and in a moment drowned the whole ship. The rest of the night was passed upon the stairs, with an immense jumble of men and women. When anybody came up for any purpose we all fell down; and when anybody came down we all fell up again. Still, the good-humour in the English part of the passengers was quite extraordinary. There were excellent officers aboard, and the first mate lent me his cabin to wash in in the morning, which I afterwards lent to Egg and Collins. Then we and the Emerson Tennents (who were aboard) and the captain, the doctor, and the second officer went off on a jaunt together to Pisa, as the ship was to lie at Leghorn all day.

The captain was a capital fellow, but I led him, facetiously, such a life all day, that I got almost everything altered at night. Emerson Tennent, with the greatest kindness, turned his son out of his stateroom (who, indeed, volunteered to go in the most amiable manner), and I got a good bed there. The storeroom down by the hold was opened for Egg and Collins, and they slept with the moist sugar, the cheese in cut, the spices, the cruets, the apples and pears — in a perfect chandler's shop; in company with what the ——'s would call a "hold gent" — who had been so horribly wet through overnight that his condition frightened the authorities — a cat, and the steward — who dozed in an arm-chair, and all night long fell headforemost, once in every five minutes, on Egg, who slept on the counter or dresser. Last night I had the steward's own cabin, opening on deck, all to myself. It had been previously occupied by some desolate lady, who went ashore at Civita Vecchia. There was little or no sea, thank Heaven, all the trip; but the rain was heavier than any I have ever seen, and the lightning very constant and vivid. We were, with the crew, some two hundred people; with boats, at the utmost stretch, for one hundred, perhaps. I could not help thinking what would happen if we met with any accident; the crew being chiefly Maltese, and evidently fellows who would cut off alone in the largest boat on the least alarm. The speed (it being the express ship for the India mail) very high; also the run-

ning through all the narrow rocky channels. Thank God, however, here we are. Though the more sensible and experienced part of the passengers agreed with me this morning that it was not a thing to try often. We had an excellent table after the first day, the best wines and so forth, and the captain and I swore eternal friendship. Ditto the first officer and the majority of the passengers. We got into the bay about seven this morning, but could not land until noon. We towed from Civita Vecchia the entire Greek navy, I believe, consisting of a little brig-of-war, with great guns, fitted as a steamer, but disabled by having burst the bottom of her boiler in her first run. She was just big enough to carry the captain and a crew of six or so, but the captain was so covered with buttons and gold that there never would have been room for him on board to put these valuables away if he had n't worn them, which he consequently did, all night.

Whenever anything was wanted to be done, as slackening the tow-rope or anything of that sort, our officers roared at this miserable potentate, in violent English, through a speaking-trumpet, of which he could n't have understood a word under the most favourable circumstances, so he did all the wrong things first, and the right things always last. The absence of any knowledge of anything not English on the part of the officers and stewards was most ridiculous. I met an Italian gentleman on the cabin steps, yesterday morning, vainly endeavouring to explain that he wanted a cup of tea for his sick wife. And when we were coming out of the harbour of Genoa, and it was necessary to order away that boat of music you remember, the chief officer (called aft for the purpose, as "knowing something of Italian") delivered himself in this explicit and clear manner to the principal performer: "Now, signora, if you don't sheer off, you 'll be run down; so you had better trice up that guitar of yours, and put about."

We get on as well as possible, and it is extremely pleasant and interesting, and I feel that the change is doing me great and real service, after a long continuous strain upon the mind; but I am pleased to think that we are at our farthest point, and I look forward with joy to coming home again, to my old room, and the old walks, and all the old pleasant things.

I wish I had arranged, or could have done so — for it would

not have been easy — to find some letters here. It is a hard to stay for five days in a place without any.

I don't think Edward knows fifty Italian words; but more French is spoken in Italy now than when we were here, and he stumbles along somehow.

I am afraid this is a dull letter, for I am very tired. I must take the will for the deed, my dear, and good night.

Ever most affectionately.

CCIX. MISS HOGARTH

Rome, Sunday Night, November 13, 1853.

My dearest Georgy, — We arrived here yesterday afternoon, at between three and four. On sending to the post-office this morning, I received your pleasant little letter, and one from Miss Coutts, who is still at Paris. But to my amazement there was none from Catherine! You mention her writing, and I cannot but suppose that your two letters must have been posted together. However, I received none from her, and I have all manner of doubts respecting the plainness of its direction. They will not produce the letters here as at Genoa, but persist in looking them out at the post-office for you. I shall send again to-morrow, and every day until Friday, when we leave here. If I find no letter from her *to-morrow*, I shall write to her nevertheless by that post which brings this, so that you may both hear from me together.

One night at Naples, Edward came in, open-mouthed, to the table d'hôte where we were dining with the Tennents, to announce "The Marchese Garofalo." I at first thought it must be the little parrot-marquess who was once your escort from Genoa; but I found him to be a man (married to an English woman) whom we used to meet at Ridgway's. He was very glad to see me, and I afterwards met him at dinner at Mr. Lowther's, our chargé d'affaires. Mr. Lowther was at the Rockingham play, and is a very agreeable fellow. We had an exceedingly pleasant dinner of eight, preparatory to which I was near having the ridiculous adventure of not being able to find the house and coming back dinnerless. I went in an open carriage from the hotel in all state, and the coachman, to my surprise, pulled up at the end of the Chiaja. "Behold the house," says he, "of Il Signor Larthoor!" — at the same time

pointing with his whip into the seventh heaven, where the early stars were shining. "But the Signor Larthoor," returns the Inimitable darling, "lives at Pausilippo." "It is true," says the coachman (still pointing to the evening star), "but he lives high up the Salita Sant' Antonio, where no carriage ever yet ascended, and that is the house" (evening star as aforesaid), "and one must go on foot. Behold the Salita Sant' Antonio!" I went up it, a mile and a half I should think. I got into the strangest places, among the wildest Neapolitans — kitchens, washing-places, archways, stables, vineyards — was baited by dogs, answered in profoundly unintelligible Neapolitan, from behind lonely locked doors, in cracked female voices, quaking with fear; could hear of no such Englishman or any Englishman. By and by I came upon a Polenta-shop in the clouds, where an old Frenchman, with an umbrella like a faded tropical leaf (it had not rained for six weeks), was staring at nothing at all, with a snuff-box in his hand. To him I appealed concerning the Signor Larthoor. "Sir," said he, with the sweetest politeness, "can you speak French?" "Sir," said I, "a little." "Sir," said he, "I presume the Signor Loothere" — you will observe that he changed the name according to the custom of his country — "is an Englishman." I admitted that he was the victim of circumstances and had that misfortune. "Sir," said he, "one word more. *Has* he a servant with a wooden leg?" "Great Heaven, sir," said I, "how do I know! I should think not, but it is possible." "It is always," said the Frenchman, "possible. Almost all the things of the world are always possible." "Sir," said I — you may imagine my condition and dismal sense of my own absurdity, by this time — "that is true." He then took an immense pinch of snuff, wiped the dust off his umbrella, led me to an arch commanding a wonderful view of the bay of Naples, and pointed deep into the earth from which I had mounted. "Below there, near the lamp, one finds an Englishman, with a servant with a wooden leg. It is always possible that he is the Signor Loothere." I had been asked at six, and it was now getting on for seven. I went down again in a state of perspiration and misery not to be described, and without the faintest hope of finding the place. But as I was going down to the lamp, I saw the strangest staircase up a dark corner, with a man in a white waistcoat (evidently hired) standing on the top of it, fuming.

I dashed in at a venture, found it was the place, made the most of the whole story, and was indescribably popular. The best of it was, that as nobody ever did find the place, he had put a servant at the bottom of the Salita, to "wait for an English gentleman." The servant (as he presently pleaded), deceived by the moustache, had allowed the English gentleman to pass unchallenged.

The night before we left Naples we were at the San Carlo, where, with the Verdi rage of our old Genoa time, they were again doing the "Trovatore." It seemed rubbish on the whole to me, but was very fairly done. I think "La Tenco," the prima donna, will soon be a great hit in London. She is a very remarkable singer and a fine actress, to the best of my judgment on such premises. There seems to be no opera here at present. There was a Festa in St. Peter's to-day, and the Pope passed to the Cathedral in state. We were all there.

We leave here, please God, on Friday morning, and post to Florence in three days and a half. We came here by Vetturino. Upon the whole, the roadside inns are greatly improved since our time. Half-past three and half-past four have been, however, our usual times of rising on the road.

I was in my old place at the Coliseum this morning, and it was as grand as ever. With that exception the ruined part of Rome — the real original Rome — looks smaller than my remembrance made it. It is the only place on which I have yet found that effect. We are in the old hotel.

You are going to Bonchurch I suppose? will be there, perhaps, when this letter reaches you? I shall be pleased to think of you as at home again, and making the commodious family mansion look natural and homelike. I don't like to think of my room without anybody to peep into it now and then. Here is a world of travelling arrangements for me to settle, and here are Collins and Egg looking sideways at me with an occasional imploring glance as beseeching me to settle it. So I leave off. Good night.

Ever, my dearest Georgy,

Most affectionately yours.

CCX. SIR JAMES EMERSON TENNENT

HÔTEL DES ILES BRITANNIQUES, PIAZZA DEL POPOLO, ROME,
Monday, November 14, 1853.

MY DEAR TENNENT, — As I never made a good bargain in my life — except once, when, on going abroad, I let my house on excellent terms to an admirable tenant, who never paid anything — I sent Edward into the Casa Dies yesterday morning, while I invested the premises from the outside, and carefully surveyed them. It is a very clean, large, bright-looking house at the corner of the Via Gregoriana; not exactly in a part of Rome I should pick out for living in, and on what I should be disposed to call the wrong side of the street. However, this is not to the purpose. Signor Dies has no idea of letting an apartment for a short time — scouted the idea of a month — signified that he could not be brought to the contemplation of two months — was by no means clear that he could come down to the consideration of three. This of course settled the business speedily.

This hotel is no longer kept by the Melloni I spoke of, but is even better kept than in his time, and is a very admirable house. I have engaged a small apartment for you to be ready on Thursday afternoon (at two piastres and a half — two and a half per day — sitting-room and three bedrooms, one double-bedded and two not). If you would like to change to ours, which is a very good one, on Friday morning, you can of course do so. As our dining-room is large, and there is no table d'hôte here, I will order dinner in it for our united parties at six on Thursday. You will be able to decide how to arrange for the remainder of your stay, after being here and looking about you — two really necessary considerations in Rome.

Pray make my kind regards to Lady Tennent, and Miss Tennent, and your good son, who became homeless for my sake. Mr. Egg and Mr. Collins desire to be also remembered.

It has been beautiful weather since we left Naples, until to-day, when it rains in a very dogged, sullen, downcast, and determined manner. We have been speculating at breakfast on the possibility of its raining in a similar manner at Naples, and of your wandering about the hotel, refusing consolation.

I grieve to report the Orvieto considerably damaged by the

general vine failure, but still far from despicable. Much come (the Est wine you know) is to be had here: and we had one bottle in the very finest condition, and one in a second-rate state.

The Coliseum, in its magnificent old decay, is as grand as ever; and with the electric telegraph darting through its ruined arches like a sunbeam and piercing direct through a cruel old heart, is even grander.

Believe me always, very faithfully yours.

CCXI. MRS. CHARLES DICKENS

ROME, Monday, November 14, 1853.

MY DEAREST CATHERINE, — As I have mentioned in my letter to Georgy (written last night but posted with this), I received her letter without yours, to my unbounded astonishment. This morning, on sending again to the post-office, I at last got yours, and most welcome it is with all its contents.

I found Layard at Naples, who went up Vesuvius with us, and was very merry and agreeable. He is travelling with Lord and Lady Somers, and Lord Somers being laid up with an attack of malaria fever, Layard had a day to spare. Craven, who was Lord Normanby's Secretary of Legation in Paris, now lives at Naples, and is married to a French lady. He is very hospitable and hearty, and seemed to have vague ideas that something might be done in a pretty little private theatre he has in his house. He told me of Fanny Kemble and the Sartoris's being here. I have also heard of Thackeray's being here — I don't know how truly. Lockhart is here, and, I fear, very ill. I am to go and see him.

We are living in the old hotel, which is not now kept by Meloni, who has retired. I don't know whether you recollect an apartment at the top of the house, to which we once ran up with poor Roche to see the horses start in the race at the Carnival time? That is ours, in which I at present write. We have a large back dining room, a handsome front drawing-room, looking into the Piazza del Popolo, and three front bedrooms, all on a floor. The whole costs us about four shillings a day each. The hotel is better kept than ever. There is a little kitchen to each apartment where the dinner is kept hot. There is no house comparable to it in Paris, and it is better than

Mivart's. We start for Florence, post, on Friday morning, and I am bargaining for a carriage to take us on to Venice.

Edward is an excellent servant, and always cheerful and ready for his work. He knows no Italian, except the names of a few things, but French is far more widely known here now than in our time. Neither is he an experienced courier as to roads and so forth; but he picks up all that I want to know, here and there, somehow or other. I am perfectly pleased with him, and would rather have him than an older hand. Poor dear Roche comes back to my mind though, often.

I have written to engage the courier from Turin into France, from *Tuesday, the 6th December*. This will bring us home some two days after the tenth, probably. I wrote to Charley from Naples, giving him his choice of meeting me at Lyons, in Paris, or at Boulogne. I gave him full instructions what to do if he arrived before me, and he will write to me at Turin saying where I shall find him. I shall be a day or so later than I supposed as the nearest calculation I could make when I wrote to him; but his waiting for me at an hotel will not matter.

We have had delightful weather, with one day's exception, until to-day, when it rained very heavily and suddenly. Egg and Collins have gone to the Vatican, and I am "going" to try whether I can hit out anything for the Christmas number. Give my love to Forster, and tell him I won't write to him until I hear from him.

I have not come across any English whom I know except Layard and the Emerson Tennents, who will be here on Thursday from Civita Vecchia, and are to dine with us. The losses up to this point have been two pairs of shoes (one mine and one Egg's), Collins's snuff-box, and Egg's dressing-gown.

We observe the managerial punctuality in all our arrangements, and have not had any difference whatever.

I have been reserving this side all through my letter, in the conviction that I had something else to tell you. If I had, I cannot remember what it is. I introduced myself to Salvatore at Vesuvius, and reminded him of the night when poor Le Gros fell down the mountains. He was full of interest directly, remembered the very hole, put on his gold-banded cap, and went up with us himself. He did not know that Le Gros was dead, and was very sorry to hear it. He asked after the ladies, and hoped they were very happy, to which I answered, "Very."

The cone is completely changed since our visit, is not at all recognisable as the same place; and there is no fire from the mountain, though there is a great deal of smoke. Its last demonstration was in 1850.

I shall be glad to think of your all being at home again, as I suppose you will be soon after the receipt of this. Will you see to the invitations for Christmas Day, and write to Lætitia? I shall be very happy to be at home again myself, and to embrace you; for of course I miss you *very much*, though I feel that I could not have done a better thing to clear my mind and freshen it up again, than make this expedition. If I find Charley much ahead of me, I shall start on through a night or so to meet him, and leave the others to catch us up. I look upon the journey as almost closed at Turin. My best love to Mamey, and Katey, and Sydney, and Harry, and the darling Plornishghenter. We often talk about them, and both my companions do so with interest. They always send all sorts of messages to you, which I never deliver. God bless you! Take care of yourself. Ever most affectionately.

CCXII. W. H. WILLS

ROME, Thursday Afternoon, November 17, 1853.

MY DEAR WILLS, — Just as I wrote the last words of the inclosed little story for the Christmas number just now, Edward brought in your letter. Also one from Forster (tell him) which I have not yet opened. I will write again — and write to him — from Florence. I am delighted to have news of you.

The inclosed little paper for the Christmas number is in a character that nobody else is likely to hit, and which is pretty sure to be considered pleasant. Let Forster have the MS. with the proof, and I know he will correct it to the minutest point. I have a notion of another little story, also for the Christmas number. If I can do it at Venice, I will, and send it straight on. But it is not easy to work under these circumstances. In travelling we generally get up about three; and in resting we are perpetually roaming about in all manner of places. Not to mention my being laid hold of by all manner of people.

KEEP "HOUSEHOLD WORDS" IMAGINATIVE! is the solemn and continual Conductorial Injunction. Delighted to hear of Mrs. Gaskell's contributions.

Yes by all manner of means to Lady Holland. Will you ask her whether she has Sydney Smith's letters to me, which I placed (at Mrs. Smith's request) either in Mrs. Smith's own hands or in Mrs. Austin's? I cannot remember which, but I think the latter.

In making up the Christmas number, don't consider my paper or papers, with any reference saving to where they will fall best. I have no liking, in the case, for any particular place.

All perfectly well. Companion moustaches (particularly Egg's) dismal in the extreme. Kindest regards to Mrs. Wills.

Ever faithfully.

CCXIII. W. H. WILLS

FLORENCE, Monday, November 21, 1853.

MY DEAR WILLS, —

H. W.

I sent you by post from Rome, on Wednesday last, a little story for the Christmas number, called "The Schoolboy's Story." I have an idea of another short one, to be called "Nobody's Story," which I hope to be able to do at Venice, and to send you straight home before this month is out. I trust you have received the first safely.

Edward continues to do extremely well. He is always, early and late, what you have seen him. He is a very steady fellow, a little too bashful for a courier even; settles prices of everything now, as soon as we come into an hotel; and improves fast. His knowledge of Italian is painfully defective, and, in the midst of a howling crowd at a post-house or railway station, this deficiency perfectly stuns him. I was obliged last night to get out of the carriage, and pluck him from a crowd of porters who were putting our baggage into wrong conveyances — by cursing and ordering about in all directions. I should think about ten substantives, the names of ten common objects, form his whole Italian stock. It matters very little at the hotels, where a great deal of French is spoken now; but, on the road, if none of his party knew Italian, it would be a very serious inconvenience indeed.

Will you write to Ryland if you have not heard from him, and ask him what the Birmingham reading-nights are really to be? For it is ridiculous enough that I positively don't know. Can't a Saturday Night in a Truck District, or a Sunday Morn-

ing among the Ironworkers (a fine subject) be knocked out in the course of the same visit?

If you should see any managing-man you know in the Oriental and Peninsular Company, I wish you would very gravely mention to him from me that if they are not careful what they are about with their steamship Valetta, between Marseilles and Naples, they will suddenly find that they will receive a blow one fine day in "The Times," which it will be a very hard matter for them ever to recover. When I sailed in her from Genoa, there had been taken on board, *with no caution in most cases from the agent, or hint of discomfort,* at least forty people of both sexes for whom there was no room whatever. I am a pretty old traveller as you know, but I never saw anything like the manner in which pretty women were compelled to lie among the men in the great cabin and on the bare decks. The good-humour was beyond all praise, but the natural indignation very great; and I was repeatedly urged to stand up for the public in "Household Words," and to write a plain description of the facts to "The Times." If I had done either, and merely mentioned that all these people paid heavy first-class fares, I will answer for it that they would have been beaten off the station in a couple of months. I did neither, because I was the best of friends with the captain and all the officers, and never saw such a fine set of men; so admirable in the discharge of their duty, and so zealous to do their best by everybody. It is impossible to praise them too highly. But there is a strong desire at all the ports along the coast to throw impediments in the way of the English service, and to favour the French and Italian boats. In those boats (which I know very well) great care is taken of the passengers, and the accommodation is very good. If the Peninsular and Oriental add to all this the risk of such an exposure as they are *certain* to get (if they go on so) in "The Times," they are dead sure to get a blow from the public which will make them stagger again. I say nothing of the number of the passengers and the room in the ship's boats, though the frightful consideration the contrast presented must have been in more minds than mine. I speak only of the taking people for whom there is no sort of accommodation as the most decided swindle, and the coolest, I ever did with my eyes behold. Kindest regards from fellow travellers.

Ever, my dear Wills, faithfully yours.

CCXIV. MISS HOGARTH

VENICE, Friday, November 25, 1853.

MY DEAREST GEORGY, — We found an English carriage from Padua at Florence, and hired it to bring it back again. We travelled post with four horses all the way (from Padua to this place there is a railroad), and travelled all night. We left Florence at half-past six in the morning, and got to Padua at eleven next day — yesterday. The cold at night was most intense. I don't think I have ever felt it colder. But our carriage was very comfortable, and we had some wine and some rum to keep us warm. We came by Bologna (where we had tea) and Ferrara. You may imagine the delays in the night when I tell you that each of our passports, after receiving *six visés* at Florence, received in the course of the one night, *nine more*, every one of which was written and sealed; somebody being slowly knocked out of bed to do it every time! It really was excruciating.

Landor had sent me a letter to his son, and on the day before we left Florence I thought I would go out to Fiesole and leave it. So I got a little one-horse open carriage and drove off alone. We were within half a mile of the Villa Landoro, and were driving down a very narrow lane like one of those at Albaro, when I saw an elderly lady coming towards us, very well dressed in silk of the Queen's blue, and walking freshly and briskly against the wind at a good round pace. It was a bright, cloudless, very cold day, and I thought she walked with great spirit, as if she enjoyed it. I also thought (perhaps that was having him in my mind) that her ruddy face was shaped like Landor's. All of a sudden the coachman pulls up, and looks inquiringly at me. "What 's the matter?" says I. "Ecco la Signora Landoro?" says he. "For the love of Heaven, don't stop," says I. "*I* don't know her, I am only going to the house to leave a letter — go on!" Meanwhile she (still coming on) looked at me, and I looked at her, and we were both a good deal confused, and so went our several ways. Altogether, I think it was as disconcerting a meeting as I ever took part in, and as odd a one. Under any other circumstances I should have introduced myself, but the separation made the circumstances so peculiar that "I did n't like."

The Plornishghenter is evidently the greatest, noblest, finest, cleverest, brightest, and most brilliant of boys. Your account of him is most delightful, and I hope to find another letter from you somewhere on the road, making me informed of his demeanour on your return. On which occasion, as on every other, I have no doubt he will have distinguished himself as an irresistibly attracting, captivating May-Roon-Ti-Goon-Ter. Give him a good many kisses for me. I quite agree with Syd as to his ideas of paying attention to the old gentleman. It 's not bad, but deficient in originality. The usual deficiency of an inferior intellect with so great a model before him. I am very curious to see whether the Plorn remembers me on my reappearance.

I meant to have gone to work this morning, and to have tried a second little story for the Christmas number of "Household Words," but my letters have (most pleasantly) put me out, and I defer all such wise efforts until to-morrow. Egg and Collins are out in a gondola with a servitore di piazza.

You will find this but a stupid letter, but I really have no news. We go to the opera, whenever there is one, see sights, eat and drink, sleep in a natural manner two or three nights, and move on again. Edward was a little crushed at Padua yesterday. He had been extraordinarily cold all night in the rumble, and had got out our clothes to dress, and I think must have been projecting a five or six hours' sleep, when I announced that he was to come on here in an hour and a half to get the rooms and order dinner. He fell into a sudden despondency of the profoundest kind, but was quite restored when we arrived here between eight and nine. We found him waiting at the custom-house with a gondola in his usual brisk condition.

It is extraordinary how few English we see. With the exception of a gentlemanly young fellow (in a consumption I am afraid), married to the tiniest little girl, in a brown straw hat, and travelling with his sister and her sister, and a consumptive single lady, travelling with a maid and a Scotch terrier christened Trotty Veck, we have scarcely seen any, and have certainly spoken to none, since we left Switzerland. These were aboard the Valetta, where the captain and I indulged in all manner of insane suppositions concerning the straw hat — the "Little Matron" we called her; by which name she soon be-

came known all over the ship. The day we entered Rome, and the moment we entered it, there was the Little Matron, alone with antiquity — and Murray — on the wall. The very first church I entered, there was the Little Matron. On the last afternoon, when I went alone to St. Peter's, there was the Little Matron and her party. The best of it is, that I was extremely intimate with them, invited them to Tavistock House, when they come home in the spring, and have not the faintest idea of their name.

There was no table d'hôte at Rome, or at Florence, but there is one here, and we dine at it to-day, so perhaps we may stumble upon somebody. I have heard from Charley this morning, who appoints (wisely) Paris as our place of meeting. I had a letter from Coote, at Florence, informing me that his volume of "Household Songs" was ready, and requesting permission to dedicate it to me. Which of course I gave.

I am beginning to think of the Birmingham readings. I suppose you won't object to be taken to hear them? This is the last place at which we shall make a stay of more than one day. We shall stay at Parma one, and at Turin one, supposing De la Rue to have been successful in taking places with the courier into France for the day on which we want them (he was to write to bankers at Turin to do it), and then we shall come hard and fast home. I feel almost there already, and shall be delighted to close the pleasant trip, and get back to my own Piccola Camera — if, being English, you understand what *that* is. My best love and kisses to Mamey, Katey, Sydney, Harry, and the noble Plorn. Last, not least, to yourself, and many of them. I will not wait over to-morrow, tell Kate, for her letter; but will write then, whether or no.

Ever, my dearest Georgy,
Most affectionately yours.

CCXV. THE HON. MRS. WATSON

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, Friday, January 13, 1854.

MY DEAR MRS. WATSON, — On the very day after I sent the Christmas number to Rockingham, I heard of your being at Brighton. I should have sent another there, but that I had a misgiving I might seem to be making too much of it. For when I thought of the probability of the Rockingham copy

going on to Brighton, and pictured to myself the advent of one of those very large envelopes at once at Junction House at breakfast-time, a sort of comic modesty overcame me. I was heartily pleased with the Birmingham audience, which was a very fine one. I never saw, nor do I suppose anybody ever did, such an interesting sight as the working people's faces. There were two thousand five hundred of them there, and a more delicately observant audience it is impossible to imagine. They lost nothing, misinterpreted nothing, followed everything closely, laughed and cried with most delightful earnestness, and animated me to that extent that I felt as if we were all boldly going up into the clouds together. It is an enormous place for the purpose; but I had considered all that carefully, and I believe made the most distant person hear as well as if I had been reading in my own room. I was a little doubtful before I began on the first night whether it was quite practicable to conceal the requisite effort; but I soon had the satisfaction of finding that it was, and that we were all going on together, to the first page, as easily, to all appearance, as if we had been sitting round the fire.

I am obliged to go out on Monday at five and to dine out; but I will be at home at any time before that hour that you may appoint. You say you are only going to stay one night in town; but if you could stay two, and would dine with us alone on Tuesday, *that* is the plan that we should all like best. Let me have one word from you by post on Monday morning. Few things that I saw, when I was away, took my fancy so much as the Electric Telegraph, piercing, like a sunbeam, right through the cruel old heart of the Coliseum at Rome. And on the summit of the Alps, among the eternal ice and snow, there it was still, with its posts sustained against the sweeping mountain winds by clusters of great beams — to say nothing of its being at the bottom of the sea as we crossed the Channel. With kindest loves,

Ever, my dear Mrs. Watson,

Most faithfully yours.

CCXVI. MISS MARY BOYLE

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, Monday, January 16, 1854.

MY DEAR MARY, — It is all very well to pretend to love me as you do. Ah! If you loved as *I* love, Mary! But when my breast is tortured by the perusal of such a letter as yours, Falkland, Falkland, madam, becomes my part in "The Rivals," and I play it with desperate earnestness.

As thus: —

Falkland (*to Acres*). Then you see her, sir, sometimes?

Acres. See her! Odds beams and sparkles, yes. See her acting! Night after night.

Falkland (*aside and furious*). Death and the devil! Acting, and I not there! Pray, sir (*with constrained calmness*), what does she act?

Acres. Odds, monthly nurses and babbies! Sairey Gamp and Betsey Prig, "which, wotever it is, my dear (*mimicking*), I likes it brought reg'lar and draw'd mild!" *That*'s very like her.

Falkland. Confusion! Laceration! Perhaps, sir, perhaps she sometimes acts — ha! ha! perhaps she sometimes acts, I say — eh! sir? — a — ha, ha, ha! a fairy? (*With great bitterness.*)

Acres. Odds, gauzy pinions and spangles, yes! You should hear her sing as a fairy. You should see her dance as a fairy. Tol de rol lol — la — lol — liddle, diddle. (*Sings and dances.*) *That*'s very like her.

Falkland. Misery! while I, devoted to her image, can scarcely write a line now and then, or pensively read aloud to the people of Birmingham. (*To him.*) And they applaud her, no doubt they applaud her, sir. And she — I see her! Curtsies and smiles! And they — curses on them! they laugh and — ha, ha, ha! — and clap their hands — and say it's very good. Do they not say it's very good, sir? Tell me. Do they not?

Acres. Odds, thunderings and pealings, of course they do! and the third fiddler, little Tweaks, of the county town, goes into fits. Ho, ho, ho, I can't bear it (*mimicking*); take me

out! Ha, ha, ha! O what a one she is! She 'll be the death of me. Ha, ha, ha, ha! *That* 's very like her!

Falkland. Damnation! Heartless Mary! (*Rushes out.*)

Scene opens, and discloses coals of fire, heaped up into form of letters, representing the following inscription: —

When the praise thou meetest
To thine ear is sweetest,
O then

REMEMBER JOE!

(*Curtain Falls.*)

CCXVII. M. DE CERJAT

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, Monday, January 16, 1854.

MY DEAR CERJAT, — Guilty. The accused pleads guilty, but throws himself upon the mercy of the court. He humbly represents that his usual hour for getting up, in the course of his travels, was three o'clock in the morning, and his usual hour for going to bed, nine or ten the next night. That the places in which he chiefly deviated from these rules of hardship were Rome and Venice; and that at those cities of fame he shut himself up in solitude, and wrote Christmas papers for the incomparable publication known as "Household Words." That his correspondence at all times, arising out of the business of the said "Household Words" alone, was very heavy. That his offence, though undoubtedly committed, was unavoidable, and that a nominal punishment will meet the justice of the case.

We had only three bad days out of the whole time. After Naples, which was very hot, we had very cold, clear, bright weather. When we got to Chamounix, we found the greater part of the inns shut up and the people gone. No visitors whatsoever, and plenty of snow. These were the very best circumstances under which to see the place, and we stayed a couple of days at the Hôtel de Londres (hastily refurbished for our entertainment), and climbed through the snow to the Mer de Glace, and thoroughly enjoyed it. Then we went, in mule procession (I walking), to the old hotel at Martigny, where Collins was ill, and I suppose I bored Egg to death by talking all the evening about the time when you and I were there together.

Naples (a place always painful to me, in the intense degradation of the people) seems to have only three classes of inhabitants left in it — priests, soldiers (standing army one hundred thousand strong), and spies. Of macaroni we ate very considerable quantities everywhere; also, for the benefit of Italy, we took our share of every description of wine. At Naples I found Layard, the Nineveh traveller, who is a friend of mine and an admirable fellow; so we fraternised and went up Vesuvius together, and ate more macaroni and drank more wine. At Rome, the day after our arrival, they were making a saint at St. Peter's; on which occasion I was surprised to find what an immense number of pounds of wax candles it takes to make the regular, genuine article. From Turin to Paris, over the Mont Cenis, we made only one journey. The Rhone, being frozen and foggy, was not to be navigated, so we posted from Lyons to Châlons, and everybody else was doing the like, and there were no horses to be got, and we were stranded at midnight in amazing little cabarets, with nothing worth mentioning to eat in them, except the iron stove, which was rusty, and the billiard-table, which was musty. We left Turin on a Tuesday evening, and arrived in Paris on a Friday evening; where I found my son Charley, hot — or I should rather say cold — from Germany, with his arms and legs so grown out of his coat and trousers, that I was ashamed of him, and was reduced to the necessity of taking him, under cover of night, to a ready-made establishment in the Palais Royal, where they put him into balloon-waisted pantaloons, and increased my confusion. Leaving Calais on the evening of Sunday, the 10th of December; fact of distinguished author's being aboard was telegraphed to Dover; thereupon authorities of Dover Railway detained train to London for distinguished author's arrival, rather to the exasperation of British public. D. A. arrived at home between ten and eleven that night, thank God, and found all well and happy.

I think you see "The Times," and if so, you will have seen a very graceful and good account of the Birmingham readings. It was the most remarkable thing that England could produce, I think, in the way of a vast intelligent assemblage; and the success was most wonderful and prodigious — perfectly overwhelming and astounding altogether. They wound up by giving my wife a piece of plate, having given me one before; and

when you come to dine here (may it be soon!) it shall be displayed in the centre of the table.

Tell Mrs. Cerjat, to whom my love, and all our loves, [illegible] have highly excited them at home here by giving them an account in detail of all your daughters; further, that the way in which Catherine and Georgina have questioned me and cross-questioned me about you all, notwithstanding, is maddening. Mrs. Watson has been obliged to pass her Christmas at Brighton alone with her younger children, in consequence of her two eldest boys coming home to Rockingham from school with the whooping-cough. The quarantine expires to-day, however; and she drives here, on her way back into Northamptonshire, to-morrow.

The sad affair of the Preston strike remains unsettled; and I hear, on strong authority, that if that were settled, the Manchester people are prepared to strike next. Provisions very dear, but the people very temperate and quiet in general. So ends this jumble, which looks like the index to a chapter in a book, I find, when I read it over.

Ever, my dear Cerjat, heartily your friend.

CCXVIII. CHARLES KNIGHT

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, January 30, 1854.

MY DEAR KNIGHT, — Indeed there is no fear of my thinking you the owner of a cold heart. I am more than three parts disposed, however, to be ferocious with you for ever writing down such a preposterous truism.

My satire is against those who see figures and averages, and nothing else — the representatives of the wickedest and most enormous vice of this time — the men who, through long years to come, will do more to damage the real useful truths of political economy than I could do (if I tried) in my whole life; the addled heads who would take the average of cold in the Crimea during twelve months as a reason for clothing a soldier in nankeens on a night when he would be frozen to death in fur, and who would comfort the labourer in travelling twelve miles a day to and from his work, by telling him that the average distance of one inhabited place from another in the whole area of England, is not more than four miles. Bah! What have you to do with these?

I shall put the book upon a private shelf (after reading it) by "Once upon a Time." I should have buried my pipe of peace and sent you this blast of my war-horn three or four days ago, but that I have been reading to a little audience of three thousand five hundred at Bradford.

Ever affectionately yours.

CCXIX. REV. JAMES WHITE

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, Tuesday, March 7, 1854.

MY DEAR WHITE, — I am tardy in answering your letter; but "Hard Times," and an immense amount of enforced correspondence, are my excuse. To you a sufficient one, I know.

As I should judge from outward and visible appearances, I have exactly as much chance of seeing the Russian fleet reviewed by the Czar as I have of seeing the English fleet reviewed by the Queen.

"Club Law" made me laugh very much when I went over it in the proof yesterday. It is most capitally done, and not (as I feared it might be) too directly. It is in the next number but one.

Mrs. —— has gone stark mad — and stark naked — on the spirit-rapping imposition. She was found t' other day in the street, clothed only in her chastity, a pocket-handkerchief, and a visiting-card. She had been informed, it appeared, by the spirits, that if she went out in that trim she would be invisible. She is now in a madhouse, and, I fear, hopelessly insane. One of the curious manifestations of her disorder is that she can bear nothing black. There is a terrific business to be done, even when they are obliged to put coals on her fire.

—— has a thing called a Psycho-grapher, which writes at the dictation of spirits. It delivered itself, a few nights ago, of this extraordinarily lucid message: —

X., Y., Z!

upon which it was gravely explained by the true believers that "the spirits were out of temper about something." Said —— had a great party on Sunday, when it was rumoured "a count was going to raise the dead." I stayed till the ghostly hour, but the rumour was unfounded, for neither count nor plebeian

came up to the spiritual scratch. It is really inexplicable to me that a man of his calibre can be run away with by such small deer.

A propos of spiritual messages comes in Georgina, and, hearing that I am writing to you, delivers the following enigma to be conveyed to Mrs. White: —

"Wyon of the Mint lives *at* the Mint."

Feeling my brain going after this, I only trust it with loves from all to all.

Ever faithfully.

CCXX. CHARLES KNIGHT

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, March 17, 1854.

MY DEAR KNIGHT, — I have read the article with much interest. It is most conscientiously done, and presents a great mass of curious information condensed into a surprisingly small space.

I have made a slight note or two here and there, with a soft pencil, so that a touch of india-rubber will make all blank again.

And I earnestly entreat your attention to the point (I have been working upon it, weeks past, in "Hard Times") which I have jocosely suggested on the last page but one. The English are, so far as I know, the hardest-worked people on whom the sun shines. Be content if, in their wretched intervals of pleasure, they read for amusement and do no worse. They are born at the oar, and they live and die at it. Good God, what would we have of them!

Affectionately yours always.

CCXXI. W. H. WILLS

OFFICE OF "HOUSEHOLD WORDS,"
No. 16, WELLINGTON [redacted] STRAND,
Wednes[redacted]

I know all the walks for many and [redacted] about Malvern, and delightful walks they [redacted] already getting very stout, very red, v[redacted] point of view) altogether.

Mark and I walked to Dartford from Greenwich, last Monday, and found Mrs. —— acting "The Stranger" (with a strolling company from the Standard Theatre) in Mr. Munn's schoolroom. The stage was a little wider than your table here, and its surface was composed of loose boards laid on the school forms. Dogs sniffed about it during the performances, and *the* carpenter's highlows were ostentatiously taken off and displayed in the proscenium.

We stayed until a quarter to ten, when we were obliged to fly to the railroad, but we sent the landlord of the hotel down with the following articles: —

1 bottle superior old port,
1 do. do. golden sherry,
1 do. do. best French brandy,
1 do. do. 1st quality old Tom gin,
1 do. do. prime Jamaica rum,
1 do. do. small still *Isla* whiskey,
1 kettle boiling water, two pounds finest white lump sugar,
Our cards,
1 lemon,
and
Our compliments.

The effect we had previously made upon the theatrical company by being beheld in the first two chairs — there was nearly a pound in the house — was altogether electrical.

My ladies send their kindest regards, and are disappointed at your not saying that you drink two-and-twenty tumblers of the limpid element, every day. The children also unite in "loves," and the Plornishghenter, on being asked if he would send his, replies "Yes — man," which we understand to signify cordial acquiescence.

Forster just come back from lecturing at Sherborne. Describes said lecture as "Blaze of Triumph."

H. W. AGAIN

Miss — I mean Mrs. — Bell's story very nice. I have sent it to the printer, and entitled it "The Green Ring and the Gold Ring."

This apartment looks desolate in your absence; but, O Heavens, how tidy!

F. W.

Mrs. Wills supposed to have gone into a convent at Somers Town.

My dear Wills,
Ever faithfully yours.

CCXXII. B. W. PROCTER

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, Saturday Night, April 15, 1854.

MY DEAR PROCTER, — I have read the "Fatal Revenge." Don't do what the minor theatrical people call "despi-ser" me, but I think it 's very bad. The concluding narrative is by far the most meritorious part of the business. Still, the people are so very convulsive and tumble down so many places, and are always knocking other people's bones about in such a very irrational way, that I object. The way in which earthquakes won't swallow the monsters, and volcanoes in eruption won't boil them, is extremely aggravating. Also their habit of bolting when they are going to explain anything.

You have sent me a very different and a much better book; and for that I am truly grateful. With the dust of "Maturin" in my eyes, I sat down and read "The Death of Friends," and the dust melted away in some of those tears it is good to shed. I remember to have read "The Back-Room Window" some years ago, and I have associated it with you ever since. It is a most delightful paper. But the two volumes are all delightful, and I have put them on a shelf where you sit down with Charles Lamb again, with Talfourd's vindication of him hard by.

We never meet. I hope it is not irreligious, but in this strange London I have an inclination to adapt a portion of the Church Service to our common experience. Thus: —

"We have left unmet the people whom we ought to have met, and we have met the people whom we ought not to have met, and there seems to be no help in us."

But I am always, my dear Procter

(At a distan

Ver

CCXXIII. MRS. GASKELL

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, April 21, 1854.

MY DEAR MRS. GASKELL, — I safely received the paper from Mr. Shaen, welcomed it with three cheers, and instantly despatched it to the printer, who has it in hand now.

I have no intention of striking. The monstrous claims at domination made by a certain class of manufacturers, and the extent to which the way is made easy for working men to slide down into discontent under such hands, are within my scheme; but I am not going to strike, so don't be afraid of me. But I wish you would look at the story yourself, and judge where and how near I seem to be approaching what you have in your mind. The first two months of it will show that.

I will "make my will" on the first favourable occasion. We were playing games last night, and were fearfully clever. With kind regards to Mr. Gaskell, always, my dear Mrs. Gaskell, Faithfully yours.

CCXXIV. FRANK STONE, A. R. A.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, May 30, 1854.

MY DEAR STONE, — I can *not* stand a total absence of ventilation, and I should have liked (in an amiable and persuasive manner) to have punched ——'s head, and opened the register stoves. I saw the supper tables, sir, in an empty state, and was charmed with them. Likewise I recovered myself from a swoon, occasioned by long contact with an unventilated man of a strong flavour from Copenhagen, by drinking an unknown species of celestial lemonade in that enchanted apartment.

I am grieved to say that on Saturday I stand engaged to dine, at three weeks' notice, with one ——, a man who has read every book that ever was written, and is a perfect gulf of information. Before exploding a mine of knowledge he has a habit of closing one eye and wrinkling up his nose, so that he seems perpetually to be taking aim at you and knocking you over with a terrific charge. Then he looks again, and takes another aim. So you are always on your back, with your legs in the air.

How can a man be conversed with, or walked with, in the county of Middlesex, when he is reviewing the Kentish Militia

on the shores of Dover, or sailing, every day for three w
between Dover and Calais?

Ever affectionate

P. S. — "Humphry Clinker" is certainly Smollett's
I am rather divided between "Peregrine Pickle" and
erick Random," both extraordinarily good in their way.
is a way without tenderness; but you will have to read
both, and I send the first volume of "Peregrine" as the
of the two.

CCXXV. W. H. WILLS

VILLA DU CAMP DE DROITE, Thursday, June 22,

MY DEAR WILLS, — I have nothing to say, but having
from you this morning, think I may as well report all wel

We have a most charming place here. It beats the f
residence all to nothing. We have a beautiful garden, wi
its fruits and flowers, and a field of our own, and a road
own away to the Column, and everything that is airy and
The great Beaucourt hovers about us like a guardian geniu
I imagine that no English person in a carriage could b
possibility find the place.

Of the wonderful inventions and contrivances with wh
certain inimitable creature has made the most of it, I wil
nothing, until you have an opportunity of inspecting the
At present I will only observe that I have written ex
seventy-two words of "Hard Times," since I have been he

The children arrived on Tuesday night, by London bo
every stage and aspect of sea-sickness.

The camp is about a mile off, and huts are now building
(they say) sixty thousand soldiers. I don't imagine it t
near enough to bother us.

If the weather ever should be fine, it might do you
sometimes to come over with the proofs on a Saturday, w
the tide serves well, before you and Mrs. W. make your an
visit. Recollect there is always a bed, and no sudden app
ance will put us out.

Kind regards. Ever faithfully

CCXXVI. WILKIE COLLINS

VILLA DU CAMP DE DROITE, BOULOGNE,
Wednesday Night, July 12, 1854.

MY DEAR COLLINS, — Bobbing up, corkwise, from a sea of "Hard Times," I beg to report this tenement — AMAZING ! ! ! Range of view and air, most free and delightful; hillside garden, delicious; field, stupendous; speculations in haycocks already effected by the undersigned, with the view to the keeping up of a "home" at rounders.

I hope to finish and get to town by next Wednesday night, the 19th; what do you say to coming back with me on the following Tuesday? The interval I propose to pass in a career of amiable dissipation and unbounded licence in the metropolis. If you will come and breakfast with me about midnight — anywhere — any day, and go to bed no more until we fly to these pastoral retreats, I shall be delighted to have so vicious an associate.

Will you undertake to let Ward know that if he still wishes me to sit to him, he shall have me as long as he likes, at Tavistock House, on Monday, the 24th, from ten A. M. ?

I have made it understood here that we shall want to be taken the greatest care of this summer, and to be fed on nourishing meats. Several new dishes have been rehearsed and have come out very well. I have met with what they call in the City "a parcel" of the celebrated 1846 champagne. It is a very fine wine, and calculated to do us good when weak.

The camp is about a mile off. Voluptuous English authors reposing from their literary fatigues (on their laurels) are expected, when all other things fail, to lie on straw in the midst of it when the days are sunny, and stare at the blue sea until they fall asleep. (About one hundred and fifty soldiers have been at various times billeted on Beaucourt since we have been here, and he has clinked glasses with them every one, and read a MS. book of his father's, on soldiers in general, to them all.)

I shall be glad to hear what you say to these various proposals. I write with the Emperor in the town, and a great expenditure of tricolour floating thereabouts, but no stir makes its way to this inaccessible retreat. It is like being up in a

balloon. Lionising Englishmen and Germans start to c... are found lying imbecile in the road halfway up. Ha! ha!

Kindest regards from all. The Plornishghenter ... and Mrs. Goose's duty. Ever faithfully

P. S. — The cobbler has been ill these many months ... unable to work; has had a carbuncle in his back, and has cut three times a week. The little dog sits at the door unhappy and anxious to help, that I every day expect to see him beginning a pair of top-boots.

CCXXVII. MISS HOGARTH

OFFICE OF "HOUSEHOLD WORDS," Saturday, July 22, 1854

MY DEAR GEORGINA, — Neither you nor Catherine did justice to Collins's book.[1] I think it far away the cleverest new I have ever seen written by a new hand. It is in some respects masterly. "Valentine Blyth" is as original, and as well done as anything can be. The scene where he shows his pictures is full of an admirable humour. Old Mat is admirably done. In short, I call it a very remarkable book, and have been very much surprised by its great merit.

Tell Kate, with my love, that she will receive to-morrow in a little parcel, the complete proofs of "Hard Times." They will not be corrected, but she will find them pretty plain. I am just now going to put them up for her. I saw Grisi the night before last in "Lucrezia Borgia" — finer than ever. Last night I was drinking gin-slings till daylight, with Buckstone of all people, who saw me looking at the Spanish dancers and insisted on being convivial. I have been in a blaze of dissipation altogether, and have succeeded (I think) in knocking the remembrance of my work out.

Loves to all the darlings, from the Plornish-Maroon upward. London is far hotter than Naples. Ever affectionately.

CCXXVIII. W. H. WILLS

BOULOGNE, Wednesday, August 2, 1854.

MY DEAR WILLS, — I will endeavour to come off my back (and the grass) to do an opening paper for the starting number

[1] *Hide and Seek.*

of "North and South." I can't positively answer for such a victory over the idleness into which I have delightfully sunk, as the achievement of this feat; but let us hope.

During a fête on Monday night the meteor flag of England (forgotten to be struck at sunset) was *stolen ! ! !*

Manage the proofs of "H. W." so that I may not have to correct them on a Sunday. I am not going over to the Sabbatarians, but like the haystack (particularly) on a Sunday morning.

I should like John to call on M. Henri, Townshend's servant, 21, Norfolk Street, Park Lane, and ask him if, when he comes here with his master, he can take charge of a trap bat and ball. If yea, then I should like John to proceed to Mr. Darke, Lord's Cricket Ground, and purchase said trap bat and ball of the best quality. Townshend is coming here on the 15th, probably will leave town a day or two before.

Pray be in a condition to drink a glass of the 1846 champagne when *you* come.

I think I have no more to say at present. I cannot sufficiently admire my prodigious energy in coming out of a stupor to write this letter. Ever faithfully.

CCXXIX. MRS. GASKELL

VILLA DU CAMP DE DROITE, BOULOGNE,
Thursday, August 17, 1854.

MY DEAR MRS. GASKELL, — I sent your MS. off to Wills yesterday, with instructions to forward it to you without delay. I hope you will have received it before this notification comes to hand.

The usual festivity of this place at present — which is the blessing of soldiers by the ten thousand — has just now been varied by the baptising of some new bells, lately hung up (to my sorrow and lunacy) in a neighbouring church. An English lady was godmother; and there was a procession afterwards, wherein an English gentleman carried "the relics" in a highly suspicious box, like a barrel-organ; and innumerable English ladies in white gowns and bridal wreaths walked two and two, as if they had all gone to school again.

At a review, on the same day, I was particularly struck by the commencement of the proceedings, and its singular contrast

to the usual military operations in Hyde Park. Nothing would induce the general commanding in chief to begin, until chairs were brought for all the lady spectators. And a detachment of about a hundred men deployed into all manner of farmhouses to find the chairs. Nobody seemed to lose any dignity by the transaction, either.

With kindest regards, my dear Mrs. Gaskell,

Faithfully yours always.

CCXXX. REV. WILLIAM HARNESS

VILLA DU CAMP DE DROITE, BOULOGNE,
Saturday, August 19, 1854.

MY DEAR HARNESS, — Yes. The book came from me. I could not put a memorandum to that effect on the title-page, in consequence of my being here.

I am heartily glad you like it. I know the piece you mention, but am far from being convinced by it. A great misgiving is upon me, that in many things (this thing among the rest) too many are martyrs to *our* complacency and satisfaction, and that we must give up something thereof for their poor sakes.

My kindest regards to your sister, and my love (if I may send it) to another of your relations.

Always, very faithfully yours.

CCXXXI. HENRY AUSTIN

VILLA DU CAMP DE DROITE, BOULOGNE,
Wednesday, September 6, 1854.

Any Saturday on which the tide serves your purpose (next Saturday excepted) will suit me for the flying visit you hint at; and we shall be delighted to see you. Although the camp is not above a mile from this gate, we never see or hear of it, unless we choose. If you could come here in dry weather you would find it as pretty, airy, and pleasant a situation as you ever saw. We illuminated the whole front of the house last night — eighteen windows — and an immense palace of light was seen sparkling on this hilltop for miles and miles away. I rushed to a distance to look at it, and never saw anything of the same kind half so pretty.

The town [1] looks like one immense flag, it is so decked out

[1] On the occasion of the Prince Consort's visit to the camp at Boulogne.

with streamers; and as the royal yacht approached yesterday — the whole range of the cliff-tops lined with troops, and the artillery matches in hand, already to fire the great guns the moment she made the harbour; the sailors standing up in the prow of the yacht, the Prince in a blazing uniform, left alone on the deck for everybody to see — a stupendous silence, and then such an infernal blazing and banging as never was heard. It was almost as fine a sight as one could see under a deep blue sky. In our own proper illumination I laid on all the servants, all the children now at home, all the visitors (it is the annual "Household Words" time), one to every window, with everything ready to light up on the ringing of a big dinner-bell by your humble correspondent. St. Peter's on Easter Monday was the result.

Best love from all.

Ever affectionately.

CCXXXII. WILKIE COLLINS

Boulogne, Tuesday, September 26, 1854.

My dear Collins, — First, I have to report that I received your letter with much pleasure.

Secondly, that the weather has entirely changed. It is so cool that we have not only a fire in the drawing-room regularly, but another to dine by. The delicious freshness of the air is charming, and it is generally bright and windy besides.

Thirdly, that ——'s intellectual faculties appear to have developed suddenly. He has taken to borrowing money; from which I infer (as he has no intention whatever of repaying) that his mental powers are of a high order. Having got a franc from me, he fell upon Mrs. Dickens for five sous. She declining to enter into the transaction, he beleaguered that feeble little couple, Harry and Sydney, into paying two sous each for "tickets" to behold the ravishing spectacle of an utterly-non-existent-and-therefore-impossible-to-be-produced toy theatre. He eats stony apples, and harbours designs upon his fellow creatures until he has become light-headed. From the couch rendered uneasy by this disorder he has arisen with an excessively protuberant forehead, a dull slow eye, a complexion of a leaden hue, and a croaky voice. He has become a horror to me, and I resort to the most cowardly expedients to avoid meeting him.

He, on the other hand, wanting another franc, dodges me round those trees at the corner, and at the back door; and I have a presentiment upon me that I shall fall a sacrifice to his cupidity at last.

On the Sunday night after you left, or rather on the Monday morning at half-past one, Mary was taken *very ill.* English cholera. She was sinking so fast, and the sickness was so exceedingly alarming, that it evidently would not do to wait for Elliotson. I caused everything to be done that we had naturally often thought of, in a lonely house so full of children, and fell back upon the old remedy; though the difficulty of giving even it was rendered very great by the frightful sickness. Thank God, she recovered so favourably that by breakfast-time she was fast asleep. She slept twenty-four hours, and has never had the least uneasiness since. I heard — of course afterwards — that she had had an attack of sickness two nights before. I think that long ride and those late dinners had been too much for her. Without them I am inclined to doubt whether she would have been ill.

Last Sunday as ever was, the theatre took fire at half-past eleven in the forenoon. Being close by the English church, it showered hot sparks into that temple through the open windows. Whereupon the congregation shrieked and rose and tumbled out into the street; —— benignly observing to the only ancient female who would listen to him, "I fear we must part;" and afterwards being beheld in the street — in his robes and with a kind of sacred wildness on him — handing ladies over the kennel into shops and other structures, where they had no business whatever, or the least desire to go. I got to the back of the theatre, where I could see in through some great doors that had been forced open, and whence the spectacle of the whole interior, burning like a red-hot cavern, was really very fine, even in the daylight. Meantime the soldiers were at work, "saving" the scenery by pitching it into the next street; and the poor little properties (one spinning-wheel, a feeble imitation of a water-mill, and a basketful of the dismallest artificial flowers very conspicuous) were being passed from hand to hand with the greatest excitement, as if they were rescued children or lovely women. In four or five hours the whole place was burnt down, except the outer walls. Never in my days did I behold such feeble endeavours in the way of extinguishment. On an

average I should say it took ten minutes to throw half a gallon of water on the great roaring heap; and every time it was insulted in this way it gave a ferocious burst, and everybody ran off. Beaucourt has been going about for two days in a clean collar; which phenomenon evidently means something, but I don't know what. Elliotson reports that the great conjurer lives at his hotel, has extra wine every day, and fares expensively. Is he the devil?

I have heard from the Kernel.[1] Wa'al, sir, sayin' as he minded to locate himself with us for a week, I expected to have heard from him again this morning, but have not. Beard comes to-morrow.

Kindest regards and remembrances from all. Ward lives in a little street between the two Tintilleries. The Plornish-Maroon desires his duty. He had a fall yesterday, through overbalancing himself in kicking his nurse.

Ever faithfully.

CCXXXIII. FRANK STONE, A. R. A.

Boulogne, Friday, October 13, 1854.

My dear Stone, — Having some little matters that rather press on my attention to see to in town, I have made up my mind to relinquish the walking project, and come straight home (by way of Folkestone) on Tuesday. I shall be due in town at midnight, and shall hope to see you next day, with the top of your coat-collar mended.

Everything that happens here we suppose to be an announcement of the taking of Sebastopol. When a church clock strikes, we think it is the joy-bell, and fly out of the house in a burst of nationality — to sneak in again. If they practise firing at the camp, we are sure it is the artillery celebrating the fall of the Russian, and we become enthusiastic in a moment. I live in constant readiness to illuminate the whole house. Whatever anybody says I believe; everybody says, every day, that Sebastopol is in flames. Sometimes the Commander-in-Chief has blown himself up, with seventy-five thousand men. Sometimes he has "cut" his way through Lord Raglan, and has fallen back on the advancing body of the Russians, one hundred and forty-two thousand strong, whom he is going to "bring up"

[1] Mr. Egg.

(I don't know where from, or how, or when, or why) for the destruction of the Allies. All these things, in the words of the catechism, "I steadfastly believe," until I become a mere driveller, a moonstruck, babbling, staring, credulous, imbecile, greedy, gaping, wooden-headed, addle-brained, wool-gathering, dreary, vacant, obstinate civilian.

Ever, my fellow countryman, affectionately.

CCXXXIV. JOHN SAUNDERS

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, October 26, 1854.

DEAR SIR, — I have had much gratification and pleasure in the receipt of your obliging communication. Allow me to thank you for it, in the first place, with great cordiality.

Although I cannot say that I came without any prepossessions to the perusal of your play (for I had favourable inclinings towards it before I began), I *can* say that I read it with the closest attention, and that it inspired me with a strong interest, and a genuine and high admiration. The parts that involve some of the greatest difficulties of your task appear to me those in which you shine most. I would particularly instance the end of Julia as a very striking example of this. The delicacy and beauty of her redemption from her weak, rash lover are very far indeed beyond the range of any ordinary dramatist, and display the true poetical strength.

As your hopes now centre in Mr. Phelps, and in seeing the child of your fancy on his stage, I will venture to point out to you not only what I take to be very dangerous portions of "Love's Martyrdom" as it stands, *for presentation on the stage*, but portions which I believe Mr. Phelps will speedily regard in that light when he sees it before him in the persons of live men and women on the wooden boards. Knowing him, I think he will be then as violently discouraged as he is now generously exalted; and it may be useful to you to be prepared for the consideration of those passages.

I do not regard it as a great stumbling-block that the play of modern times best known to an audience proceeds upon the main idea of this; namely, that there was a hunchback who, because of his deformity, mistrusted himself. But it is certainly a grain in the balance when the balance is going the wrong way, and therefore it should be most carefully trimmed. The incident

of the ring is an insignificant one to look at over a row of gas-lights, is difficult to convey to an audience, and the least thing will make it ludicrous. If it be so well done by Mr. Phelps himself as to be otherwise than ludicrous, it will be disagreeable. If it be either, it will be perilous, and doubly so, because you revert to it. The quarrel scene between the two brothers in the third act is now so long that the justification of blind passion and impetuosity — which can alone bear out Franklyn, before the bodily eyes of a great concourse of spectators, in plunging at the life of his own brother — is lost. That the two should be parted, and that Franklyn should again drive at him, and strike him, and then wound him, is a state of things to set the sympathy of an audience in the wrong direction, and turn it from the man you make happy to the man you leave unhappy. I would on no account allow the artist to appear, attended by that picture, more than once. All the most sudden inconstancy of Clarence I would soften down. Margaret must act much better than any actress I have ever seen, if all her lines fall in pleasant places; therefore, I think she needs compression too.

All this applies solely to the theatre. If you ever revise the sheets for readers, will you note in the margin the broken laughter and the appeals to the Deity? If, on summing them up, you find you want them all, I would leave them as they stand by all means. If not, I would blot accordingly.

It is only in the hope of being slightly useful to you by anticipating what I believe Mr. Phelps will discover — or what, if ever he should pass it, I have a strong conviction the audience will find out — that I have ventured on these few hints. Your concurrence with them generally, on reconsideration, or your preference for the poem as it stands, cannot in the least affect my interest in your success. On the other hand, I have a perfect confidence in your not taking my misgivings ill; they arise out of my sincere desire for the triumph of your work.

With renewed thanks for the pleasure you have afforded me,

I am, dear sir, faithfully yours.

CCXXXV. W. C. MACREADY

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, November 1, 1854.
(And a constitutionally foggy day.)

MY DEAREST MACREADY, — I thought it better not to encumber the address to working men with details. Firstly, because they would detract from whatever fiery effect the words may have in them; secondly, because writing and petitioning and pressing a subject upon members and candidates are now so clearly understood; and thirdly, because the paper was meant as an opening to a persistent pressure of the whole question on the public, which would yield other opportunities of touching on such points.

In the number *for next week* — not this — is one of those following-up articles called "A Home Question." It is not written by me, but is generally of my suggesting, and is exceedingly well done by a thorough and experienced hand. I think you will find in it, generally, what you want. I have told the printers to send you a proof by post as soon as it is corrected — that is to say, as soon as some insertions I made in it last night are in type and in their places.

My dear old Parr, I don't believe a word you write about King John! That is to say, I don't believe you take into account the enormous difference between the energy summonable up in your study at Sherborne and the energy that will fire up in you (without so much as saying "With your leave" or "By your leave") in the Town Hall at Birmingham. I know you, you ancient codger, I know you! Therefore I will trouble you to be so good as to do an act of honesty after you have been to Birmingham, and to write to me, "Ingenuous boy, you were correct. I find I could have read 'em 'King John' with the greatest ease."

In that vast hall in the busy town of Sherborne, in which our illustrious English novelist is expected to read next month — though he is strongly of opinion that he is deficient in power, and too old — I wonder what accommodation there is for reading! because our illustrious countryman likes to stand at a desk breast-high, with plenty of room about him, a sloping top, and a ledge to keep his book from tumbling off. If such a thing should not be there, however, on his arrival, I suppose even a

Sherborne carpenter could knock it up out of a deal board. *Is* there a deal board in Sherborne though? I should like to hear Katey's opinion on that point.

In this week's "Household Words" there is an exact portrait of our Boulogne landlord, which I hope you will like. I think of opening the next long book I write with a man of juvenile figure and strong face, who is always persuading himself that he is infirm. What do you think of the idea? I should like to have your opinion about it. I would make him an impetuous, passionate sort of fellow, devilish grim upon occasion, and of an iron purpose. Droll, I fancy?

—— is getting a little too fat, but appears to be troubled by the great responsibility of directing the whole war. He does n't seem to be quite clear that he has got the ships into the exact order he intended, on the sea point of attack at Sebastopol. We went to the play last Saturday night with Stanfield, whose "high lights" (as Maclise calls those knobs of brightness on the top of his cheeks) were more radiant than ever. We talked of you, and I told Stanny how they are imitating his "Acis and Galatea" sea in "Pericles," at Phelps's. He did n't half like it; but I added, in nautical language, that it was merely a piratical effort achieved by a handful of porpoise-faced swabs, and that brought him up with a round turn, as we say at sea.

We are looking forward to the twentieth of next month with great pleasure. All Tavistock House send love and kisses to all Sherborne House. If there is anything I can bring down for you, let me know in good course of time.

Ever, my dearest Macready,

Most affectionately yours.

CCXXXVI. THE HON. MRS. WATSON

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, Wednesday, November 1, 1854.

MY DEAR MRS. WATSON, — I take upon myself to answer your letter to Catherine, as I am referred to in it.

The "Walk" is not my writing. It is very well done by a close imitator. Why I found myself so "used up" after "Hard Times" I scarcely know, perhaps because I intended to do nothing in that way for a year, when the idea laid hold of me by the throat in a very violent manner, and because the compression and close condensation necessary for that disjointed

form of publication gave me perpetual trouble. But I really was tired, which is a result so very incomprehensible that I can't forget it. I have passed an idle autumn in a beautiful situation, and am dreadfully brown and big. For further particulars of Boulogne, see "Our French Watering-Place," in this present week of "Household Words," which contains a faithful portrait of our landlord there.

If you carry out that bright Croydon idea, rely on our glad co-operation, only let me know all about it a few days beforehand; and if you feel equal to the contemplation of the moustache (which has been cut lately) it will give us the heartiest pleasure to come and meet you. This in spite of the terrific duffery of the Crystal Palace. It is a very remarkable thing in itself; but to have so very large a building continually crammed down one's throat, and to find it a new page in "The Whole Duty of Man" to go there, is a little more than even I (and you know how amiable I am) can endure.

You always like to know what I am going to do, so I beg to announce that on the 19th of December I am going to read the "Carol" at Reading, where I undertook the presidency of the Literary Institution on the death of poor dear Talfourd. Then I am going on to Sherborne, in Dorsetshire, to do the like for another institution, which is one of the few remaining pleasures of Macready's life. Then I am coming home for Christmas Day. Then I believe I must go to Bradford, in Yorkshire, to read once more to a little fireside party of four thousand. Then I am coming home again to get up a new little version of "The Children in the Wood" (yet to be written, by the bye), for the children to act on Charley's birthday.

I am full of mixed feeling about the war — admiration of our valiant men, burning desires to cut the Emperor of Russia's throat, and something like despair to see how the old cannon-smoke and blood-mists obscure the wrongs and sufferings of the people at home. When I consider the Patriotic Fund on the one hand, and on the other the poverty and wretchedness engendered by cholera, of which in London alone an infinitely larger number of English people than are likely to be slain in the whole Russian war have miserably and needlessly died — I feel as if the world had been pushed back five hundred years. If you are reading new books just now, I think you will be interested with a controversy between Whewell and Brewster, on the

question of the shining orbs about us being inhabited or no. Whewell's book is called, "On the Plurality of Worlds;" Brewster's, "More Worlds than One." I should n't wonder if you know all about them. They bring together a vast number of points of great interest in natural philosophy, and some very curious reasoning on both sides, and leave the matter pretty much where it was.

We had a fine absurdity in connection with our luggage, when we left Boulogne. The barometer had within a few hours fallen about a foot, in honour of the occasion, and it was a tremendous night, blowing a gale of wind and raining a little deluge. The luggage (pretty heavy, as you may suppose), in a cart drawn by two horses, stuck fast in a rut in our field, and could n't be moved. Our man, made a lunatic by the extremity of the occasion, ran down to the town to get two more horses to help it out, when he returned with those horses and carter B, the most beaming of men; carter A, who had been soaking all the time by the disabled vehicle, descried in carter B the acknowledged enemy of his existence, took his own two horses out, and walked off with them! After which, the whole set-out remained in the field all night, and we came to town, thirteen individuals, with one comb and a pocket handkerchief. I was upside down during the greater part of the passage.

Dr. Rae's account of Franklin's unfortunate party is deeply interesting; but I think hasty in its acceptance of the details, particularly in the statement that they had eaten the dead bodies of their companions, which I don't believe. Franklin, on a former occasion, was almost starved to death, had gone through all the pains of that sad end, and lain down to die, and no such thought had presented itself to any of them. In famous cases of shipwreck, it is very rare indeed that any person of any humanising education or refinement resorts to this dreadful means of prolonging life. In open boats, the coarsest and commonest men of the shipwrecked party have done such things; but I don't remember more than one instance in which an officer had overcome the loathing that the idea had inspired. Dr. Rae talks about their *cooking* these remains too. I should like to know where the fuel came from.

Kindest love and best regards.

Ever, my dear Mrs. Watson, affectionately yours.

though I am afraid you come under both his conditions of exclusion.[1] Very faithfully yours.

CCXXXIX. M. DE CERJAT

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, January 3, 1855.

MY DEAR CERJAT, — When your Christmas letter did not arrive according to custom, I felt as if a bit of Christmas had fallen out and there was no supplying the piece. However, it was soon supplied by yourself, and the bowl became round and sound again.

The Christmas number of "Household Words," I suppose, will reach Lausanne about midsummer. The first ten pages or so — all under the head of "The First Poor Traveller" — are written by me, and I hope you will find, in the story of the soldier which they contain, something that may move you a little. It moved me *not* a little in the writing, and I believe has touched a vast number of people. We have sold eighty thousand of it.

I am but newly come home from reading at Reading (where I succeeded poor Talfourd as the president of an institution), and at Sherborne, in Dorsetshire, and at Bradford, in Yorkshire. Wonderful audiences! and the number at the last place three thousand seven hundred. And yet but for the noise of their laughing and cheering, they "went" like one man.

The absorption of the English mind in the war is, to me, a melancholy thing. Every other subject of popular solicitude and sympathy goes down before it. I fear I clearly see that for years to come domestic reforms are shaken to the root; every miserable red-tapist flourishes war over the head of every protester against his humbug; and everything connected with it is pushed to such an unreasonable extent that, however kind and necessary it may be in itself, it becomes ridiculous. For all this it is an indubitable fact, I conceive, that Russia MUST BE stopped, and that the future peace of the world renders the war imperative upon us. The Duke of Newcastle lately addressed a private letter to the newspapers, entreating them to exercise a larger discretion in respect of the letters of "Our

[1] The inscription on the house in Rochester known as "Watts's Charity" is to the effect that it furnishes a night's lodging for six poor travellers — "not being ROGUES or PROCTORS."

always had an especial interest in that Miss Berwick, and have over and over again questioned Wills about her. I suppose he has gone on gradually building up an imaginary structure of life and adventure for her, but he has given me the strangest information! Only yesterday week, when we were "making up" "The Poor Travellers," as I sat meditatively poking the office fire, I said to him, "Wills, have you got that Miss Berwick's proof back, of the little sailor's song?" "No," he said. "Well, but why not?" I asked him. "Why, you know," he answered, "as I have often told you before, she don't live at the place to which her letters are addressed, and so there 's always difficulty and delay in communicating with her." "Do you know what age she is?" I said. Here he looked unfathomly profound, and returned, "Rather advanced in life." "You said she was a governess, did n't you?" said I; to which he replied, in the most emphatic and positive manner, "A governess."

He then came and stood in the corner of the hearth, with his back to the fire, and delivered himself like an oracle concerning you. He told me that early in life (conveying to me the impression of about a quarter of a century ago) you had had your feelings desperately wounded by some cause, real or imaginary — "It does not matter which," said I, with the greatest sagacity — and that you had then taken to writing verses. That you were of an unhappy temperament, but keenly sensitive to encouragement. That you wrote after the educational duties of the day were discharged. That you sometimes thought of never writing any more. That you had been away for some time "with your pupils." That your letters were of a mild and melancholy character, and that you did not seem to care as much as might be expected about money. All this time I sat poking the fire, with a wisdom upon me absolutely crushing; and finally I begged him to assure the lady that she might trust me with her real address, and that it would be better to have it now, as I hoped our further communications, etc., etc., etc. You must have felt enormously wicked last Tuesday, when I, such a babe in the wood, was unconsciously prattling to you. But you have given me so much pleasure, and have made me shed so many tears, that I can only think of you now in association with the sentiment and grace of your verses.

So pray accept the blessing and forgiveness of Richard Watts,

though I am afraid you come under both his conditions of exclusion.[1] Very faithfully yours.

CCXXXIX. M. DE CERJAT

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, January 3, 1855.

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[1] The inscription on the house in Rochester known as "Watts's Charity" is to the effect that it furnishes a night's lodging for six poor travellers — "not being ROGUES or PROCTORS."

Own Correspondents," against which Lord Raglan protests as giving the Emperor of Russia information for nothing which would cost him (if indeed he could get it at all) fifty or a hundred thousand pounds a year. The communication has not been attended with much effect, so far as I can see. In the mean time I do suppose we have the wretchedest Ministry that ever was, — in whom nobody not in office of some sort believes, — yet whom there is nobody to displace. The strangest result, perhaps, of years of Reformed Parliaments that ever the general sagacity did *not* foresee.

Let me recommend you, as a brother reader of high distinction, two comedies, both Goldsmith's — "She Stoops to Conquer" and "The Good-Natured Man." Both are so admirable and so delightfully written that they read wonderfully. A friend of mine, Forster, who wrote "The Life of Goldsmith," was very ill a year or so ago, and begged me to read to him one night as he lay in bed, "something of Goldsmith's." I fell upon "She Stoops to Conquer," and we enjoyed it with that wonderful intensity, that I believe he began to get better in the first scene, and was all right again in the fifth act.

I am charmed by your account of Haldimand, to whom my love. Tell him Sydney Smith's daughter has privately printed a life of her father with selections from his letters, which has great merit, and often presents him exactly as he used to be. I have strongly urged her to publish it, and I think she will do so, about March.

My eldest boy has come home from Germany to learn a business life at Birmingham (I think), first of all. The whole nine are well and happy. Ditto, Mrs. Dickens. Ditto, Georgina. My two girls are full of interest in yours; and one of mine (as I think I told you when I was at Elysée) is curiously like one of yours in the face. They are all agog now about a great fairy play, which is to come off here next Monday. The house is full of spangles, gas, Jew theatrical tailors, and pantomime carpenters. We all unite in kindest and best loves to dear Mrs. Cerjat and all the blooming daughters. And I am, with frequent thoughts of you and cordial affection, ever, my dear Cerjat,

Your faithful friend.

CCXL. MISS MARY BOYLE

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, January 3, 1855.

MY DEAR MARY, — This is a word of heartfelt greeting, in exchange for yours, which came to me most pleasantly, and was received with a cordial welcome. If I had leisure to write a letter, I should write you, at this point, perhaps the very best letter that ever was read; but being in the agonies of getting up a gorgeous fairy play for the post-boys, on Charley's birthday (besides having the work of half a dozen to do as a regular thing), I leave the merits of the wonderful epistle to your lively fancy.

Inclosing a kiss, if you will have the kindness to return it when done with.

I have just been reading my "Christmas Carol" in Yorkshire. I should have lost my heart to the beautiful young landlady of my hotel (age, twenty-nine; dress, black frock and jacket, exquisitely braided) if it had not been safe in your possession.

Many, many happy years to you! My regards to that obstinate old Wurzell [1] and his dame, when you have them under lock and key again.

Ever affectionately yours.

CCXLI. MRS. GASKELL

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, January 27, 1855.

MY DEAR MRS. GASKELL, — Let me congratulate you on the conclusion of your story; not because it is the end of a task to which you had conceived a dislike (for I imagine you to have got the better of that delusion by this time), but because it is the vigorous and powerful accomplishment of an anxious labour. It seems to me that you have felt the ground thoroughly firm under your feet, and have strided on with a force and purpose that MUST now give you pleasure.

You will not, I hope, allow that not-lucid interval of dissatisfaction with yourself (and me?), which beset you for a minute or two once upon a time, to linger in the shape of any disagreeable association with "Household Words." I shall still look

[1] Captain Cavendish Boyle was governor of the military prison at Weedon.

forward to the large sides of paper, and shall soon feel disappointed if they don't begin to reappear.

I thought it best that Wills should write the business letter on the conclusion of the story, as that part of our communications had always previously rested with him. I trust you found it satisfactory? I refer to it, not as a matter of mere form, but because I sincerely wish everything between us to be beyond the possibility of misunderstanding or reservation.

Dear Mrs. Gaskell, very faithfully yours.

CCXLII. ARTHUR RYLAND

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, Monday, January 29, 1855.

MY DEAR MR. RYLAND, — I have been in the greatest difficulty — which I am not yet out of — to know what to read at Birmingham. I fear the idea of next month is now impracticable. Which of two other months do you think would be preferable for your Birmingham objects? Next May, or next December?

Having already read two Christmas books at Birmingham, I should like to get out of that restriction, and have a swim in the broader waters of one of my long books. I have been poring over "Copperfield" (which is my favourite), with the idea of getting a reading out of it, to be called by some such name as "Young Housekeeping and Little Emily." But there is still the huge difficulty that I constructed the whole with immense pains, and have so woven it up and blended it together, that I cannot yet so separate the parts as to tell the story of David's married life with Dora, and the story of Mr. Peggotty's search for his niece, within the time. This is my object. If I could possibly bring it to bear, it would make a very attractive reading, with a strong interest in it, and a certain completeness.

This is exactly the state of the case. I don't mind confiding to you, that I never can approach the book with perfect composure (it had such perfect possession of me when I wrote it), and that I no sooner begin to try to get it into this form than I begin to read it all, and to feel that I cannot disturb it. I have not been unmindful of the agreement we made at parting, and I have sat staring at the backs of my books for an inspiration.

This project is the only one that I have constantly reverted to, and yet I have made no progress in it!

Faithfully yours always.

CCXLIII. MONSIEUR REGNIER

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, LONDON,
Saturday Evening, February 3, 1855.

MY DEAR REGNIER, — I am coming to Paris for a week, with my friend Collins — son of the English painter who painted our green lanes and our cottage children so beautifully. Do not tell this to Le Vieux. Unless I have the ill fortune to stumble against him in the street I shall not make my arrival known to him.

I purpose leaving here on Sunday, the 11th, but I shall stay that night at Boulogne to see two of my little boys who are at school there. We shall come to Paris on Monday, the 12th, arriving there in the evening.

Now, *mon cher*, do you think you can, without inconvenience, engage me for a week an apartment — cheerful, light, and wholesome — containing a comfortable *salon et deux chambres à coucher*. I do not care whether it is an hotel or not, but the reason why I do not write for an apartment to the Hôtel Brighton is, that there they expect one to dine at home (I mean in the apartment) generally; whereas, as we are coming to Paris expressly to be always looking about us, we want to dine wherever we like every day. Consequently, what we want to find is a good apartment where we can have our breakfast but where we shall never dine.

Can you engage such accommodation for me? If you can, I shall feel very much obliged to you. If the apartment should happen to contain a little bed for a servant I might perhaps bring one, but I do not care about that at all. I want it to be pleasant and gay, and to throw myself *en garçon* on the festive *diableries de Paris*.

Mrs. Dickens and her sister send their kindest regards to Madame Regnier and you, in which I heartily join. All the children send their loves to the two brave boys and the Normandy *bonnes*.

I shall hope for a short answer from you one day next week.

My dear Regnier, Always faithfully yours.

CCXLIV. W. H. WILLS

OFFICE OF "HOUSEHOLD WORDS," Friday, February 9, 1855.

MY DEAR WILLS, — I want to alter the arrangements for to-morrow, and put you to some inconvenience.

When I was at Gravesend t' other day, I saw, at Gad's Hill — just opposite to the Hermitage, where Miss Lynn used to live — a little freehold to be sold. The spot and the very house are literally "a dream of my childhood," and I should like to look at it before I go to Paris. With that purpose I must go to Strood by the North Kent, at a quarter past ten to-morrow morning, and I want you, strongly booted, to go with me! (I know the particulars from the agent.)

Can you? Let me know. If you can, can you manage so that we can take the proofs with us? If you can't, will you bring them to Tavistock House at dinner-time to-morrow, half-past five? Forster will dine with us, but no one else.

I am uncertain of your being in town to-night, but I send John up with this. Ever faithfully.

CCXLV. MISS KING

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, Friday Evening, February 9, 1855.

MY DEAR MISS KING, — I wish to get over the disagreeable part of my letter in the beginning. I have great doubts of the possibility of publishing your story in portions.

But I think it possesses *very great merit*. My doubts arise partly from the nature of the interest which I fear requires presentation as a whole, and partly on your manner of relating the tale. The people do not sufficiently work out their own purposes in dialogue and dramatic action. You are too much their exponent; what you do for them, they ought to do for themselves. With reference to publication in detached portions (or, indeed, with reference to the force of the story in any form), that long stoppage and going back to possess the reader with the antecedents of the clergyman's biography are rather crippling. I may mention that I think the boy (the child of the second marriage) a little too "slangy." I know the kind of boyish slang which belongs to such a character in these times; but considering his part in the story, I regard it

as the author's function to elevate such a characteristic, and soften it into something more expressive of the ardour and flush of youth, and its romance. It seems to me, too, that the dialogues between the lady and the Italian maid are conventional but not natural. This observation I regard as particularly applying to the maid, and to the scene preceding the murder. Supposing the main objection surmountable, I would venture then to suggest to you the means of improvement in this respect.

The paper is so full of good touches of character, passion, and natural emotion, that I very much wish for a little time to reconsider it, and to try whether condensation here and there would enable us to get it, say, into four parts. I am not sanguine of this, for I observed the difficulties as I read it the night before last; but I am very unwilling, I assure you, to decline what has so much merit.

I am going to Paris on Sunday morning, for ten days or so. I purpose being back again within a fortnight. If you will let me think of this matter in the mean while, I shall at least have done all I can to satisfy my own appreciation of your work.

But if, in the mean time, you should desire to have it back with any prospect of publishing it through other means, a letter — the shortest in the world — from you to Mr. Wills at the "Household Words" office will immediately produce it. I repeat with perfect sincerity that I am much impressed by its merits, and that if I had read it as the production of an entire stranger, I think it would have made exactly this effect upon me.

My dear Miss King,

Very faithfully yours.

CCXLVI. MISS HOGARTH

Hôtel Meurice, Paris, Friday, February 16, 1855.

My dear Georgy, — I heard from home last night; but the posts are so delayed and put out by the snow that they come in at all sorts of times except the right times, and utterly defy all calculation. Will you tell Catherine, with my love, that I will write to her again to-morrow afternoon; I hope she may then receive my letter by Monday morning, and in it I purpose telling her when I may be expected home. The weather is so severe and the roads are so bad, that the journey

to and from Bordeaux seems out of the question. We have made up our minds to abandon it for the present, and to return about Tuesday night or Wednesday. Collins continues in a queer state, but is perfectly cheerful under the stoppage of his wine and other afflictions.

We have a beautiful apartment, very elegantly furnished, very thickly carpeted, and as warm as any apartment in Paris *can* be in such weather. We are very well waited on and looked after. We breakfast at ten, read and write till two, and then I go out walking all over Paris, while the invalid sits by the fire or is deposited in a café. We dine at five, in a different restaurant every day, and at seven or so go to the theatre — sometimes to two theatres, sometimes to three. We get home about twelve, light the fire, and drink lemonade, to which *I* add rum. We go to bed between one and two. I live in peace, like an elderly gentleman, and regard myself as in a negative state of virtue and respectability.

The theatres are not particularly good, but I have seen Lemaître act in the most wonderful and astounding manner. I am afraid we must go to the Opéra Comique on Sunday. To-morrow we dine with Regnier and to-day with the Olliffes.

"La Joie fait Peur," at the Français, delighted me. Exquisitely played and beautifully imagined altogether. Last night we went to the Porte St. Martin to see a piece (English subject) called "Jane Osborne," which the characters pronounce "Ja Nosbornnne." The seducer was Lord Nottingham. The comic Englishwoman's name (she kept lodgings and was a very bad character) was Missees Christmas. She had begun to get into great difficulties with a gentleman of the name of Meestair Cornhill, when we were obliged to leave, at the end of the first act, by the intolerable stench of the place. The whole theatre must be standing over some vast cesspool. It was so alarming that I instantly rushed into a café and had brandy.

My ear has gradually become so accustomed to French, that I understand the people at the theatres (for the first time) with perfect ease and satisfaction. I walked about with Regnier for an hour and a half yesterday, and received many compliments on my angelic manner of speaking the celestial language. There is a winter Franconi's now, high up on the Boulevards, just like the round theatre on the Champs Elysées, and as bright

and beautiful. A clown from Astley's is all in high favour there at present. He talks slang English (being evidently an idiot), as if he felt a perfect confidence that everybody understands him. His name is Boswell, and the whole cirque rang last night with cries for Boz Zwillllll! Boz Zweellll! Boz Zwuallll! etc., etc., etc., etc.

I must begin to look out for the box of bon-bons for the noble and fascinating Plornish-Maroon. Give him my love and a thousand kisses.

Loves to Mamey, Katey, Sydney, Harry, and the following stab to Anne — she forgot to pack me any shaving-soap.

Ever, my dear Georgy, most affectionately yours.

P. S. — Collins sends kind regards.

CCXLVII. W. H. WILLS

Hôtel Meurice, Paris, Friday, February 16, 1855.

My dear Wills,— I received your letter yesterday evening. I have not yet seen the lists of trains and boats, but propose arranging to return about Tuesday or Wednesday. In the mean time I am living like Gil Blas, and doing nothing. I am very much obliged to you, indeed, for the trouble you have kindly taken about the little freehold. It is clear to me that its merits resolve themselves into the view and the spot. If I had more money these considerations might, with me, overtop all others. But as it is, I consider the matter quite disposed of, finally settled in the negative, and to be thought no more about. I shall not go down and look at it, as I could add nothing to your report.

Paris is finer than ever, and I go wandering about it all day. We dine at all manner of places, and go to two or three theatres in the evening. I suppose, as an old farmer said of Scott, I am "makin' mysel'" all the time; but I seem to be rather a free-and-easy sort of superior vagabond.

I live in continual terror of ——, and am strongly fortified within doors, with a means of retreat into my bedroom always ready. Up to the present blessed moment, his staggering form has not appeared.

As to yesterday's post from England, I have not, at the present moment, the slightest idea where it may be. It is under

the snow somewhere, I suppose; but nobody expects it, and "Galignani" reprints every morning leaders from "The Times" of about a fortnight or three weeks old.

Collins, who is not very well, sends his "penitent regards," and says he is enjoying himself as much as a man with the weight of a broken promise on his conscience can.

Ever, my dear Wills, faithfully yours.

CCXLVIII. MISS KING

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, February 24, 1855.

MY DEAR MISS KING, — I have gone carefully over your story again, and quite agree with you that the episode of the clergyman could be told in a very few lines. Startling as I know it will appear to you, I am bound to say that I think the purpose of the whole tale would be immensely strengthened by great compression. I doubt if it could not be told more forcibly in half the space.

It is certainly too long for "Household Words," and I fear my idea of it is too short for you. I am, if possible, more unwilling than I was at first to decline it; but the more I have considered it, the longer it has seemed to grow. Nor can I ask you to try to present it free from that objection, because I already perceive the difficulty and pain of such an effort.

To the best of my knowledge, you are wrong about the Lady at last, and to the best of my observation, you do not express what you explain yourself to mean in the case of the Italian attendant. I have met with such talk in the romances of Maturin's time — certainly never in Italian life.

These, however, are slight points easily to be compromised in an hour. The great obstacle I must leave wholly to your own judgment, in looking over the tale again.

Believe me, always, very faithfully yours.

CCXLIX. ARTHUR RYLAND

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, February 26, 1855.

MY DEAR MR. RYLAND, — Charley came home, I assure you, perfectly delighted with his visit to you, and rapturous in his accounts of your great kindness to him.

It appears to me that the first question in reference to my

reading (I have not advanced an inch in my "Copperfield" trials, by the bye) is, whether you think you could devise any plan in connection with the room at Dee's, which would certainly bring my help in money up to five hundred pounds. That is what I want. If it could be done by a subscription for two nights, for instance, I would not be chary of my time and trouble. But if you cannot see your way clearly to that result in that connection, then I think it would be better to wait until we can have the Town Hall at Christmas. I have promised to read, about Christmas-time, at Sheffield and at Peterboro'. I *could* add Birmingham to the list, then, if need were. But what I want is, to give the institution in all five hundred pounds. That is my object, and nothing less will satisfy me.

Will you think it over, taking counsel with whomsoever you please, and let me know what conclusion you arrive at. Only think of me as subservient to the institution.

My dear Mr. Ryland, always very faithfully yours.

CCL. DAVID ROBERTS, R. A.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, February 28, 1855.

MY DEAR DAVID ROBERTS,—I hope to make it quite plain to you in a few words, why I think it right to stay away from the Lord Mayor's dinner to the club. If I did not feel a kind of rectitude involved in my non-acceptance of his invitation, your note would immediately induce me to change my mind.

Entertaining a strong opinion on the subject of the City Corporation as it stands, and the absurdity of its pretensions in an age perfectly different, in all conceivable respects, from that to which it properly belonged as a reality, I have expressed that opinion on more than one occasion within a year or so, in "Household Words." I do not think it consistent with my respect for myself, or for the art I profess, to blow hot and cold in the same breath; and to laugh at the institution in print, and accept the hospitality of its representative while the ink is staring us all in the face. There is a great deal too much of this among us, and it does not elevate the earnestness or delicacy of literature.

This is my sole consideration. Personally I have always met the present Lord Mayor on the most agreeable terms, and I think him an excellent one. As between you, and me, and him,

I cannot have the slightest objection to your telling him the truth. On a more private occasion, when he was not keeping his state, I should be delighted to interchange any courtesy with that honourable and amiable gentleman, Mr. Moon.

Believe me always cordially yours.

CCLI. W. M. THACKERAY

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, Friday Evening, March 23, 1855.

MY DEAR THACKERAY, — I have read in "The Times" to-day an account of your last night's lecture, and cannot refrain from assuring you in all truth and earnestness that I am profoundly touched by your generous reference to me. I do not know how to tell you what a glow it spread over my heart. Out of its fulness I do entreat you to believe that I shall never forget your words of commendation. If you could wholly know at once how you have moved me, and how you have animated me, you would be the happier I am very certain.

Faithfully yours ever.

CCLII. JOHN FORSTER

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, Friday, 29th March, 1855.

MY DEAR FORSTER, — I have hope of Mr. Morley,[1] whom one cannot see without knowing to be a straightforward, earnest man. I also think Higgins[2] will materially help them.[3] Generally, I quite agree with you that they hardly know what to be at; but it is an immensely difficult subject to start, and they must have every allowance. At any rate, it is not by leaving them alone and giving them no help, that they can be urged on to success. (Travers, too, I think, a man of the Anti-Corn Law League order.)

Higgins told me, after the meeting on Monday night, that on the previous evening he had been closeted with ——, whose letter in that day's paper he had put right for "The Times." He had never spoken to —— before, he said, and found him a

[1] Chairman of the Administrative Reform League Meeting at Drury Lane Theatre.

[2] Mr. Higgins, best known as a writer in *The Times*, under the name of "Jacob Omnium."

[3] The Members of the Administrative Reform League.

rather muddle-headed Scotchman as to his powers of conveying his ideas. He (Higgins) had gone over his documents judicially and with the greatest attention; and not only was —— wrong in every particular (except one very unimportant circumstance), but, in reading documents to the House, had stopped short in sentences where no stop was, and by so doing had utterly perverted their meaning.

This is to come out, of course, when said —— gets the matter on. I thought the case so changed, before I knew this, by his letter and that of the other ship-owners, that I told Morley, when I went down to the theatre, that I felt myself called upon to relieve him from the condition I had imposed.

For the rest, I am quite calmly confident that I only do justice to the strength of my opinions, and use the power which circumstances have given me, conscientiously and moderately, with a right object, and towards the prevention of nameless miseries. I should be now reproaching myself if I had not gone to the meeting, and, having been, I am very glad.

A good illustration of a Government office. —— very kindly wrote to me to suggest that "Houses of Parliament" illustration. After I had dined on Wednesday, and was going to jog slowly down to Drury Lane, it suddenly came into my head that perhaps his details were wrong. I had just time to turn to the "Annual Register," and *not one of them was correct!*

This is, of course, in close confidence.

Ever affectionately.

CCLIII. AUSTEN H. LAYARD

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, Tuesday Evening, April 3, 1855.

DEAR LAYARD, — Since I had the pleasure of seeing you again at Miss Coutts's (really a greater pleasure to me than I could easily tell you), I have thought a good deal of the duty we all owe you of helping you as much as we can. Being on very intimate terms with Lemon, the editor of "Punch" (a most affectionate and true-hearted fellow), I mentioned to him in confidence what I had at heart. You will find yourself the subject of their next large cut, and of some lines in an earnest spirit. He again suggested the point to Mr. Shirley Brooks, one of their regular corps, who will do what is right in "The Illustrated London News" and "The Weekly Chronicle," pa-

pers that go into the hands of large numbers of people. I have also communicated with Jerrold, whom I trust, and have begged him not to be diverted from the straight path of help to the most useful man in England on all possible occasions. Forster I will speak to carefully, and I have no doubt it will quicken him a little; not that we have anything to complain of in his direction. If you ever see any new loophole, cranny, needle's-eye, through which I can present your case to "Household Words," I most earnestly entreat you, as your stanch friend and admirer — you *can* have no truer — to indicate it to me at any time or season, and to count upon my being Damascus steel to the core.

All this is nothing; because all these men, and thousands of others, dote upon you. But I know it would be a comfort to me, in your hard-fighting place, to be assured of such sympathy, and therefore only I write.

You have other recreations for your Sundays in the session, I dare say, than to come here. But it is generally a day on which I do not go out, and when we dine at half-past five in the easiest way in the world, and smoke in the peacefullest manner. Perhaps one of these Sundays after Easter you might not be indisposed to begin to dig us out?

And I should like, on a Saturday of your appointing, to get a few of the serviceable men I know — such as I have mentioned — about you here. Will you think of this, too, and suggest a Saturday for our dining together?

I am really ashamed and moved that you should do your part so manfully and be left alone in the conflict. I felt you to be all you are the first moment I saw you. I know you will accept my regard and fidelity for what they are worth.

Dear Layard, very heartily yours.

CCLIV. MRS. WINTER

Tuesday, 3d April, 1855.

MY DEAR MARIA,[1] — A necessity is upon me now — as at most times — of wandering about in my old wild way, to think. I could no more resist this on Sunday or yesterday than a man can dispense with food, or a horse can help himself from being driven. I hold my inventive capacity on the stern condition

[1] Mrs. Winter, a very dear friend and companion of Charles Dickens in his youth.

that it must master my whole life, often have complete possession of me, make its own demands upon me, and sometimes, for months together, put everything else away from me. If I had not known long ago that my place could never be held, unless I were at any moment ready to devote myself to it entirely, I should have dropped out of it very soon. All this I can hardly expect you to understand — or the restlessness and waywardness of an author's mind. You have never seen it before you, or lived with it, or had occasion to think or care about it, and you cannot have the necessary consideration for it. "It is only half an hour," — "It is only an afternoon," — "It is only an evening," people say to me over and over again; but they don't know that it is impossible to command one's self sometimes to any stipulated and set disposal of five minutes, — or that the mere consciousness of an engagement will sometimes worry a whole day. These are the penalties paid for writing books. Whoever is devoted to an art must be content to deliver himself wholly up to it, and to find his recompense in it. I am grieved if you suspect me of not wanting to see you, but I can't help it; I must go my way whether or no.

I thought you would understand that in sending the card for the box I sent an assurance that there was nothing amiss. I am pleased to find that you were all so interested with the play. My ladies say that the first part is too painful and wants relief. I have been going to see it a dozen times, but have never seen it yet, and never may. Madame Céleste is injured thereby (you see how unreasonable people are!), and says in the greenroom, "M. Dickens est artiste! Mais il n'a jamais vu 'Janet Pride!'"

It is like a breath of fresh spring air to know that that unfortunate baby of yours is out of her one close room, and has about half a pint of very doubtful air per day. I could only have become her Godfather on the condition that she had five hundred gallons of open air at any rate every day of her life; and you would soon see a rose or two in the face of my other little friend, Ella, if you opened all your doors and windows throughout the whole of all fine weather, from morning to night.

I am going off; I don't know where or how far, to ponder about I don't know what. Sometimes I am half in the mood to set off for France, sometimes I think I will go and walk about

on the seashore for three or four months, sometimes I look towards the Pyrenees, sometimes Switzerland. I made a compact with a great Spanish authority last week, and vowed I would go to Spain. Two days afterwards Layard and I agreed to go to Constantinople when Parliament rises. To-morrow I shall probably discuss with somebody else the idea of going to Greenland or the North Pole. The end of all this, most likely, will be, that I shall shut myself up in some out of the way place I have not yet thought of, and go desperately to work there.

Once upon a time I did n't do such things, you say. No. But I have done them through a good many years now, and they have become myself and my life.

Ever affectionately.

CCLV. AUSTEN H. LAYARD

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, Tuesday, April 10, 1855.

DEAR LAYARD, — I shall of course observe the strictest silence, at present, in reference to your resolutions. It will be a most acceptable occupation to me to go over them with you, and I have not a doubt of their producing a strong effect out of doors.

There is nothing in the present time at once so galling and so alarming to me as the alienation of the people from their own public affairs. I have no difficulty in understanding it. They have had so little to do with the game through all these years of Parliamentary Reform, that they have sullenly laid down their cards, and taken to looking on. The players who are left at the table do not see beyond it, conceive that gain and loss and all the interest of the play are in their hands, and will never be wiser until they and the table and the lights and the money are all overturned together. And I believe the discontent to be so much the worse for smouldering, instead of blazing openly, that it is extremely like the general mind of France before the breaking-out of the first Revolution, and is in danger of being turned by any one of a thousand accidents — a bad harvest — the last strain too much of aristocratic insolence or incapacity — a defeat abroad — a mere chance at home — with such a devil of a conflagration as never has been beheld since.

Meanwhile, all our English tuft-hunting, toad-eating, and

other manifestations of accursed gentility — to say nothing of the Lord knows whose defiances of the proven truth before six hundred and fifty men — ARE expressing themselves every day. So, every day, the disgusted millions with this unnatural gloom are confirmed and hardened in the very worst of moods. Finally, round all this is an atmosphere of poverty, hunger, and ignorant desperation, of the mere existence of which perhaps not one man in a thousand of those not actually enveloped in it, through the whole extent of this country, has the least idea.

It seems to me an absolute impossibility to direct the spirit of the people at this pass until it shows itself. If they begin to bestir themselves in the vigorous national manner; if they would appear in political reunion, array themselves peacefully but in vast numbers against a system that they know to be rotten altogether, make themselves heard like the sea all round this island, I for one should be in such a movement heart and soul, and should think it a duty of the plainest kind to go along with it, and try to guide it by all possible means. But you can no more help a people who do not help themselves than you can help a man who does not help himself. And until the people can be got up from the lethargy, which is an awful symptom of the advanced state of their disease, I know of nothing that can be done beyond keeping their wrongs continually before them.

I shall hope to see you soon after you come back. Your speeches at Aberdeen are most admirable, manful, and earnest. I would have such speeches at every market-cross, and in every town hall, and among all sorts and conditions of men; up in the very balloons, and down in the very diving-bells.

Ever cordially yours.

CCLVI. JOHN FORSTER

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, Saturday, April 14, 1855.

MY DEAR FORSTER, — I cannot express to you how very much delighted I am with the "Steele." I think it incomparably the best of the series. The pleasanter humanity of the subject may commend it more to one's liking, but that again requires a delicate handling, which you have given to it in a most charming manner. It is surely not possible to approach a man

with a finer sympathy, and the assertion of the claims of literature throughout is of the noblest and most gallant kind.

I don't agree with you about the serious papers in "The Spectator," which I think (whether they be Steele's or Addison's) are generally as indifferent as the humour of "The Spectator" is delightful. And I have always had a notion that Prue understood her husband very well, and held him in consequence, when a fonder woman with less show of caprice must have let him go. But these are points of opinion. The paper is masterly, and all I have got to say is, that if —— had a grain of the honest sentiment with which it overflows, he never would or could have made so great a mistake.

Ever affectionately.

CCLVII. MARK LEMON

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, Thursday, April 26, 1855.

MY DEAR MARK, — I will call for you at two, and go with you to Highgate, by all means.

Leech and I called on Tuesday evening and left our loves. I have not written to you since, because I thought it best to leave you quiet for a day. I have no need to tell you, my dear fellow, that my thoughts have been constantly with you, and that I have not forgotten (and never shall forget) who sat up with me one night when a little place in my house was left empty.

It is hard to lose any child, but there are many blessed sources of consolation in the loss of a baby. There is a beautiful thought in Fielding's "Journey from this World to the Next," where the baby he had lost many years before was found by him all radiant and happy, building him a bower in the Elysian Fields where they were to live together when he came.

Ever affectionately yours.

P. S. — Our kindest loves to Mrs. Lemon.

CCLVIII. CLARKSON STANFIELD, R. A.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, Sunday, May 20, 1855.

MY DEAR STANNY, — I have a little lark in contemplation, if you will help it to fly.

Collins has done a melodrama (a regular old-style melo-

drama), in which there is a very good notion. I am going to act it, as an experiment, in the children's theatre here — I, Mark Collins, Egg, and my daughter Mary, the whole *dram. pers.;* our families and yours the whole audience; for I want to make the stage large and should n't have room for above five-and-twenty spectators. Now there is only one scene in the piece, and that, my tarry lad, is the inside of a lighthouse. Will you come and paint it for us one night, and we 'll all turn to and help? It is a mere wall, of course, but Mark and I have sworn that you must do it. If you will say yes, I should like to have the tiny flats made, after you have looked at the place, and not before. On Wednesday in this week I am good for a steak and the play, if you will make your own appointment here; or any day next week except Thursday. Write me a line in reply. We mean to burst on an astonished world with the melodrama, without any note of preparation. So don't say a syllable to Forster if you should happen to see him.

Ever affectionately yours.

CCLIX. CLARKSON STANFIELD

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, Tuesday Afternoon, Six o'clock, May 22, 1855.

MY DEAR STANNY, — Your note came while I was out walking. Even if I had been at home I could not have managed to dine together to-day, being under a beastly engagement to dine out. Unless I hear from you to the contrary, I shall expect you here some time to-morrow, and will remain at home. I only wait your instructions to get the little canvases made. Oh, what a pity it is not the outside of the light'us, with the sea a-rowling agin' it! Never mind, we 'll get an effect out of the inside, and there 's a storm and a shipwreck "off;" and the great ambition of my life will be achieved at last, in the wearing of a pair of very coarse petticoat trousers. So hoorar for the salt sea, mate, and bouse up!

Ever affectionately,

DICKY.

CCLX. MARK LEMON

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, May 23, 1855.

MY DEAR MARK, — Stanny says he is only sorry it is not the outside of the lighthouse with a raging sea and a transparent light. He enters into the project with the greatest delight, and I think we shall make a capital thing of it.

It now occurs to me that we may as well do a farce too. I should like to get in a little part for Katey, and also for Charley, if it were practicable. What do you think of "Animal Mag"? You and I in our old parts; Collins, Jeffrey; Charley, the Markis; Katey and Mary (or Georgina), the two ladies? Can you think of anything merry that is better? It ought to be broad, as a relief to the melodrama, unless we could find something funny with a story in it too. I rather incline myself to "Animal Mag." Will you come round and deliver your sentiments?

Ever affectionately.

CCLXI. FRANK STONE, A. R. A.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, Thursday, May 24, 1855.

MY DEAR STONE, — Great projects are afoot here for a grown-up play in about three weeks' time. Former schoolroom arrangements to be reversed — large stage and small audience. Stanfield bent on desperate effects, and all day long with his coat off, up to his eyes in distemper colours.

Will you appear in your celebrated character of Mr. Nightingale? I want to wind up with that popular farce, we all playing our old parts.

Ever affectionately.

CCLXII. THE SAME

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, May 24, 1855.

My DEAR STONE, — That 's right! You will find the words come back very quickly. Why, *of course* your people are to come, and if Stanfield don't astonish 'em, I 'm a Dutchman. O Heaven, if you could hear the ideas he proposes to me, making even *my* hair stand on end!

Will you get Marcus or some similar bright creature to copy out old Nightingale's part for you, and then return the book? This is the prompt-book, the only one I have; and Katey and Georgina (being also in wild excitement) want to write their parts out with all despatch.

Ever affectionately.

CCLXIII. WILKIE COLLINS

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, Thursday, May 24, 1855.

MY DEAR COLLINS, — I shall expect you to-morrow evening at "Household Words." I have written a little ballad for Mary — "The Story of the Ship's Carpenter and the Little Boy, in the Shipwreck."

Let us close up with "Mr. Nightingale's Diary." Will you look whether you have a book of it, or your part.

All other matters and things hereunto belonging, when we meet.

Ever faithfully.

CCLXIV. MRS. TROLLOPE

TAVISTOCK HOUSE,
Tuesday Morning, June 19, 1855.

MY DEAR MRS. TROLLOPE, — I was out of town on Sunday, or I should have answered your note immediately on its arrival. I cannot have the pleasure of seeing the famous "medium" to-night, for I have some theatricals at home. But I fear I shall not in any case be a good subject for the purpose, as I altogether want faith in the thing.

I have not the least belief in the awful unseen world being available for evening parties at so much per night; and although I should be ready to receive enlightenment from any source, I must say I have very little hope of it from the spirits who express themselves through mediums, as I have never yet observed them to talk anything but nonsense, of which (as Carlyle would say) there is probably enough in these days of ours, and in all days, among mere mortality.

Very faithfully yours.

CCLXV. CLARKSON STANFIELD, R. A.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, Wednesday, June 20, 1855.

MY DEAR STANNY, — I write a hasty note to let you know that last night was perfectly wonderful ! ! !

Such an audience ! Such a brilliant success from first to last ! The Queen had taken it into her head in the morning to go to Chatham, and had carried Phipps with her. He wrote to me asking if it were possible to give him a quarter of an hour. I got through that time before the overture, and he came without any dinner, so influenced by eager curiosity. Lemon and I did every conceivable absurdity, I think, in the farce; and they never left off laughing. At supper I proposed your health, which was drunk with nine times nine, and three cheers over. We then turned to at Scotch reels (having had no exercise), and danced in the maddest way until five this morning.

It is as much as I can do to guide the pen.

With loves to Mrs. Stanfield and all,

Ever most affectionately yours.

CCLXVI. W. C. MACREADY

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, Saturday, June 30, 1855.

MY VERY DEAR MACREADY, — I write shortly, after a day's work at my desk, rather than lose a post in answering your enthusiastic, earnest, and young — how young, in all the best side of youth — letter.

To tell you the truth, I confidently expected to hear from you. I knew that if there were a man in the world who would be interested in, and who would approve of, my giving utterance to whatever was in me at this time, it would be you. I was as sure of you as of the sun this morning.

The subject is surrounded by difficulties; the Association is sorely in want of able men; and the resistance of all the phalanx, who have an interest in corruption and mismanagement, is the resistance of a struggle against death. But the great, first, strong necessity is to rouse the people up, to keep them stirring and vigilant, to carry the war dead into the tent of such creatures as ——, and ring into their souls (or what stands for them) that the time for dandy insolence is gone for ever. It

may be necessary to come to that law of primogeniture (I have no love for it), or to come to even greater things; but this is the first service to be done; and unless it is done, there is not a chance. For this, and to encourage timid people to come in, I went to Drury Lane the other night; and I wish you had been there and had seen and heard the people.

The Association will be proud to have your name and gift. When we sat down on the stage the other night, and were waiting a minute or two to begin, I said to Morley, the chairman (a thoroughly fine earnest fellow), "this reminds me so of one of my dearest friends, with a melancholy so curious, that I don't know whether the place feels familiar to me or strange." He was full of interest directly, and we went on talking of you until the moment of his getting up to open the business.

They are going to print my speech in a tract-form, and send it all over the country. I corrected it for the purpose last night. We are all well. Charley in the city; all the boys at home for the holidays; three prizes brought home triumphantly (one from the Boulogne waters and one from Wimbledon); I taking dives into a new book, and runs at leap-frog over "Household Words;" and Anne going to be married — which is the only bad news.

Catherine, Georgie, Mary, Katey, Charley, and all the rest, send multitudes of loves. Ever, my dearest Macready, with unalterable affection and attachment,

Your faithful friend.

CCLXVII. MRS. WINTER

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, Wednesday, June 30, 1855.

MY DEAR MRS. WINTER, — I am truly grieved to hear of your affliction in the loss of your darling baby. But if you be not, even already, so reconciled to the parting from that innocent child for a little while, as to bear it gently and with a softened sorrow, I know that that not unhappy state of mind must soon arise. The death of infants is a release from so much chance and change — from so many casualties and distresses — and is a thing so beautiful in its serenity and peace — that it should not be a bitterness, even in a mother's heart. The simplest and most affecting passage in all the noble history of our Great Master, is His consideration for little children, and

in reference to yours, as many millions of bereaved mothers poor and rich will do in reference to theirs until the end of time, you may take the comfort of the generous words, "And He took a child, and set it in the midst of them."

In a book, by one of the greatest English writers, called "A Journey from this World to the Next," a parent comes to the distant country beyond the grave, and finds the little girl he had lost so long ago engaged in building a bower to receive him in, when his aged steps should bring him there at last. He is filled with joy to see her, so young — so bright — so full of promise — and is enraptured to think that she never was old, wan, tearful, withered. This is always one of the sources of consolation in the deaths of children. With no effort of the fancy, with nothing to undo, you will always be able to think of the pretty creature you have lost, *as a child* in heaven.

A poor little baby of mine lies in Highgate Cemetery — and I laid her just as you think of laying yours, in the catacombs there, until I made a resting-place for all of us in the free air.

It is better that I should not come to see you. I feel quite sure of that, and will think of you instead.

God bless and comfort you! Mrs. Dickens and her sister send their kindest condolences to yourself and Mr. Winter. I add mine with all my heart.

Affectionately your friend.

CCLXVIII. WILKIE COLLINS

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, Sunday, 8th July, 1855.

MY DEAR COLLINS, — I don't know whether you may have heard from Webster, or whether the impression I derived from Mark's manner on Friday may be altogether correct. But it strongly occurred to me that Webster was going to decline the play, and that he really has worried himself into a fear of playing Aaron.

Now, when I got this into my head — which was during the rehearsal — I considered two things: firstly, how we could best put about the success of the piece more widely and extensively even than it has yet reached; and secondly, how you could be best assisted against a bad production of it hereafter, or no production of it. I thought I saw immediately that the point would be to have this representation noticed in the news-

papers. So I waited until the rehearsal was over and we had profoundly astonished the family, and then asked Colonel Waugh what he thought of sending some cards for Tuesday to the papers. He highly approved, and I yesterday morning directed Mitchell to send to all the morning papers, and to some of the weekly ones — a dozen in the whole.

I dined at Lord John's yesterday (where Meyerbeer was, and said to me after dinner: "Ah, mon ami illustre! que c'est noble de vous entendre parler de haute voix morale, à la table d'un ministre!" for I gave them a little bit of truth about Sunday that was like bringing a Sebastopol battery among the polite company), I say, — after this long parenthesis, I dined at Lord John's, and found great interest and talk about the play, and about what everybody who had been here had said of it. And I was confirmed in my decision that the thing for you was the invitation to the papers. Hence I write to tell you what I have done.

I dine at home at half-past five if you are disengaged, and I shall be at home all the evening. Ever faithfully.

NOTE (by Mr. Wilkie Collins). — This characteristically kind endeavour to induce managers of theatres to produce "The Lighthouse," after the amateur performances of the play, was not attended with any immediate success. The work remained in the author's desk until Messrs. Robson and Emden undertook the management of the Olympic Theatre. They opened their first season with "The Lighthouse;" the part of Aaron Gurnock being performed by Mr. F. Robson. — W. C.

CCLXIX. MISS EMILY JOLLY[1]

3 ALBION VILLAS, FOLKESTONE, KENT,
Tuesday, 17th July, 1855.

DEAR MADAM, — Your manuscript, entitled "A Wife's Story," has come under my own perusal within these last three or four days. I recognise in it such great merit and unusual promise, and I think it displays so much power and knowledge of the human heart, that I feel a strong interest in you as its writer.

I have begged the gentleman, who is in my confidence as to the transaction of the business of "Household Words," to return the MS. to you by the post, which (as I hope) will convey this

[1] Authoress of *Mr. Arle*, and many other clever novels.

note to you. My object is this: I particularly entreat you to consider the catastrophe. You write to be read, of course. The close of the story is unnecessarily painful — will throw off numbers of persons who would otherwise read it, and who (as it stands) will be deterred by hearsay from so doing, and is so tremendous a piece of severity that it will defeat your purpose. All my knowledge and experience, such as they are, lead me straight to the recommendation that you will do well to spare the life of the husband, and of one of the children. Let her suppose the former dead, from seeing him brought in wounded and insensible — lose nothing of the progress of her mental suffering afterwards when that doctor is in attendance upon her — but bring her round at last to the blessed surprise that her husband is still living, and that a repentance which can be worked out, *in the way of atonement for the misery she has occasioned to the man whom she so ill repaid for his love, and made so miserable*, lies before her. So will you soften the reader whom you now, as it were, harden, and so you will bring tears from many eyes, which can only have their spring in affectionately and gently touched hearts. I am perfectly certain that with this change, all the previous part of your tale will tell for twenty times as much as it can in its present condition. And it is because I believe you have a great fame before you if you do justice to the remarkable ability you possess, that I venture to offer you this advice in what I suppose to be the beginning of your career.

I observe some parts of the story which would be strengthened, even in their psychological interest, by condensation here and there. If you will leave that to me, I will perform the task as conscientiously and carefully as if it were my own. But the suggestion I offer for your acceptance, no one but yourself can act upon.

Let me conclude this hasty note with the plain assurance that I have never been so much surprised and struck by any manuscript I have read, as I have been by yours.

Your faithful servant.

CCLXX. WILKIE COLLINS

3, Albion Villas, Folkestone,
Tuesday, July 17, 1855.

My dear Collins, — Walter goes back to school on the 1st of August. Will you come out of school to this breezy vacation on the same day, or rather *this day fortnight, July 31?* for that is the day on which he leaves us, and we begin (here's a parent!) to be able to be comfortable. Why a boy of that age should seem to have on at all times a hundred and fifty pair of double-soled boots, and to be always jumping a bottom stair with the whole hundred and fifty, I don't know. But the woeful fact is within my daily experience.

We have a very pleasant little house, overlooking the sea, and I think you will like the place. It rained, in honour of our arrival, with the greatest vigour, yesterday. I went out after dinner to buy some nails (you know the arrangements that would be then in progress), and I stopped in the rain, about halfway down a steep, crooked street, like a crippled ladder, to look at a little coachmaker's, where there had just been a sale. Speculating on the insolvent coachmaker's business, and what kind of coaches he could possibly have expected to get orders for in Folkestone, I thought, "What would bring together fifty people now, in this little street, at this little rainy minute?" On the instant, a brewer's van, with two mad horses in it, and the harness dangling about them — like the trappings of those horses you are acquainted with, who bolted through the starry courts of heaven — dashed by me, and in that instant, such a crowd as would have accumulated in Fleet Street sprang up magically. Men fell out of windows, dived out of doors, plunged down courts, precipitated themselves down steps, came down waterspouts, instead of rain, I think, and I never saw so wonderful an instance of the gregarious effect of an excitement.

A man, a woman, and a child had been thrown out on the horses taking fright and the reins breaking. The child is dead, and the woman very ill, but will probably recover, and the man has a hand broken and other mischief done to him.

Let me know what Wigan says. If he does not take the play, and readily too, I would recommend you not to offer it

elsewhere. You have gained great reputation by it, have done your position a deal of good, and (as I think) stand so well with it, that it is a pity to engender the notion that you care to stand better.

Ever faithfully.

CCLXXI. MISS EMILY JOLLY

3, Albion Villas, Folkestone, July 21, 1855.

Dear Madam, — I did not enter, in detail, on the spirit of the alteration I propose in your story; because I thought it right that you should think out that for yourself if you applied yourself to the change. I can now assure you that you describe it exactly as I had conceived it; and if I had wanted anything to confirm me in my conviction of its being right, our both seeing it so precisely from the same point of view would be ample assurance to me.

I would leave her new and altered life to be inferred. It does not appear to me either necessary or practicable (within such limits) to do more than that. Do not be uneasy if you find the alteration demanding time. I shall quite understand that, and my interest will keep. *When* you finish the story, send it to Mr. Wills. Besides being in daily communication with him, I am at the office once a week; and I will go over it in print, before the proof is sent to you.

Very faithfully yours.

CCLXXII. W. H. WILLS

Folkestone, September 16, 1855.

My dear Wills, — Scrooge is delighted to find that Bob Cratchit is enjoying his holiday in such a delightful situation; and he says (with that warmth of nature which has distinguished him since his conversion), "Make the most of it, Bob; make the most of it."

[I am just getting to work on No. 3 of the new book, and am in the hideous state of mind belonging to that condition.]

I have not a word of news. I am steeped in my story, and rise and fall by turns into enthusiasm and depression.

Ever faithfully.

CCLXXIII. THE HON. MRS. WATSON

FOLKESTONE, Sunday, September 16, 1855.

MY DEAR MRS. WATSON, — This will be a short letter, but I hope not unwelcome. If you knew how often I write to you — in intention — I don't know where you would find room for the correspondence.

Catherine tells me that you want to know the name of my new book. I cannot bear that you should know it from any one but me. It will not be made public until the end of October; the title is: —

"NOBODY'S FAULT"

Keep it as the apple of your eye — an expressive form of speech, though I have not the least idea of what it means.

Next, I wish to tell you that I have appointed to read at Peterboro', on Tuesday, the 18th of December. I have told the Dean that I cannot accept his hospitality, and that I am going with Mr. Wills to the inn; therefore I shall be absolutely at your disposal, and shall be more than disappointed if you don't stay with us. As the time approaches will you let me know your arrangements, and whether Mr. Wills can bespeak any rooms for you in arranging for me? Georgy will give you our address in Paris as soon as we shall have settled there. We shall leave here, I think, in rather less than a month from this time.

You know my state of mind as well as I do, indeed, if you don't know it much better, it is not the state of mind I take it to be. How I work, how I walk, how I shut myself up, how I roll down hills and climb up cliffs; how the new story is everywhere — heaving in the sea, flying with the clouds, blowing in the wind; how I settle to nothing, and wonder (in the old way) at my own incomprehensibility. I am getting on pretty well, have done the first two numbers, and am just now beginning the third; which egotistical announcements I make to you because I know you will be interested in them.

All the house send their kindest loves. I think of inserting an advertisement in "The Times," offering to submit the Plornishghenter to public competition, and to receive fifty thousand pounds if such another boy cannot be found, and to pay five pounds (my fortune) if he can.

Ever, my dear Mrs. Watson, affectionately yours.

CCLXXIV. WILKIE COLLINS

FOLKESTONE, Sunday, September 30, 1855.

MY DEAR COLLINS, — Welcome from the bosom of the deep! If a hornpipe will be acceptable to you at any time (as a reminder of what the three brothers were always doing), I shall be, as the chairman says at Mr. Evans's, "happy to oblige."

I have almost finished No. 3, in which I have relieved my indignant soul with a scarifier. Sticking at it day after day, I am the *in*completest letter-writer imaginable — seem to have no idea of holding a pen for any other purpose but that book. My fair Laura has not yet reported concerning Paris, but I should think will have done so before I see you. And now to that point. I purpose being in town on *Monday, the 8th*, when I have promised to dine with Forster. At the office, between half-past eleven and one that day, I will expect you, unless I hear from you to the contrary. Of course the "H. W." stories are at your disposition. If you should have completed your idea, we might breakfast together at the G. on the Tuesday morning and discuss it. Or I shall be in town after ten on the Monday night. At the office I will tell you the idea of the Christmas number, which will put you in train, I hope, for a story. I have postponed the shipwreck idea for a year, as it seemed to require more force from me than I could well give it with the weight of a new start upon me.

All here send their kindest remembrances. We missed you very much, and the Plorn was quite inconsolable. We slide down Cæsar occasionally.

They launched the boat, the rapid building of which you remember, the other day. All the fishermen in the place, all the nondescripts, and all the boys pulled at it with ropes from six A. M. to four P. M. Every now and then the ropes broke, and they all fell down in the shingle. The obstinate way in which the beastly thing would n't move was so exasperating that I wondered they did n't shoot it, or burn it. Whenever it moved an inch they all cheered; whenever it would n't move they all swore. Finally, when it was quite given over, some one tumbled against it accidentally (as it appeared to me, looking out at my window here), and it instantly shot about a mile into the sea, and they all stood looking at it helplessly.

Kind regards to Pigott, in which all unite.

Ever faithfully.

CCLXXV. W. C. MACREADY

FOLKESTONE, Thursday, October 4, 1855.

MY DEAREST MACREADY, — I have been hammering away in that strenuous manner at my book, that I have had leisure for scarcely any letters but such as I have been obliged to write; having a horrible temptation when I lay down my book-pen to run out on the breezy downs here, tear up the hills, slide down the same, and conduct myself in a frenzied manner, for the relief that only exercise gives me.

Your letter to Miss Coutts in behalf of little Miss Warner I despatched straightway. She is at present among the Pyrenees, and a letter from her crossed that one of mine in which I inclosed yours, last week.

Pray stick to that dim notion you have of coming to Paris! How delightful it would be to see your aged countenance and perfectly bald head in that capital! It will renew your youth to visit a theatre (previously dining at the Trois Frères) in company with the jocund boy who now addresses you. Do, do stick to it.

You will be pleased to hear, I know, that Charley has gone into Baring's house under very auspicious circumstances. Mr. Bates, of that firm, had done me the kindness to place him at the brokers' where he was. And when said Bates wrote to me a fortnight ago to say that an excellent opening had presented itself at Baring's, he added that the brokers gave Charley "so high a character for ability and zeal" that it would be unfair to receive him as a volunteer, and he must begin at a fifty-pound salary, to which I graciously consented.

As to the suffrage, I have lost hope even in the ballot. We appear to me to have proved the failure of representative institutions without an educated and advanced people to support them. What with teaching people to "keep in their stations," what with bringing up the soul and body of the land to be a good child, or to go to the beer-shop, to go a poaching and go to the devil; what with having no such thing as a middle class (for though we are perpetually bragging of it as our safety, it is nothing but a poor fringe on the mantle of the upper); what with flunkeyism, toadyism, letting the most contemptible lords come in for all manner of places, reading "The Court Circular"

for the New Testament, I do reluctantly believe that the English people are habitually consenting parties to the miserable imbecility into which we have fallen, *and never will help themselves out of it.* Who is to do it, if anybody is, God knows. But at present we are on the down-hill road to being conquered, and the people WILL be content to bear it, sing "Rule Britannia," and WILL NOT be saved.

In No. 3 of my new book I have been blowing off a little of indignant steam which would otherwise blow me up, and with God's leave I shall walk in the same all the days of my life; but I have no present political faith or hope — not a grain.

I am going to read the "Carol" here to-morrow in a long carpenter's shop, which looks far more alarming as a place to hear in than the Town Hall at Birmingham.

Kindest loves from all to your dear sister, Kate, and the darlings. It is blowing a gale here from the southwest and raining like mad.

Ever most affectionately.

CCLXXVI. MRS. CHARLES DICKENS

2, RUE ST. FLORENTIN, Tuesday, October 16, 1855.

MY DEAREST CATHERINE, — We have had the most awful job to find a place that would in the least suit us, for Paris is perfectly full, and there is nothing to be got at any sane price. However, we have found two apartments — an *entresol* and a first floor, with a kitchen and servants' room at the top of the house, at No. 49, Avenue des Champs Elysées.

You must be prepared for a regular Continental abode. There is only one window in each room, but the front apartments all look upon the main street of the Champs Elysées, and the view is delightfully cheerful. There are also plenty of rooms. They are not over and above well furnished, but by changing furniture from rooms we don't care for to rooms we *do* care for, we shall be able to make them homelike and presentable. I think the situation itself almost the finest in Paris; and the children will have a window from which to look on the busy life outside.

We could have got a beautiful apartment in the Rue Faubourg St. Honoré for a very little more, most elegantly furnished; but the greater part of it was on a courtyard, and it

would never have done for the children. This, that I have taken for six months, is seven hundred francs per month, and twenty more for the *concierge*. What you have to expect is a regular French residence, which a little habitation will make pretty and comfortable, with nothing showy in it, but with plenty of rooms, and with that wonderful street in which the Barrière de l'Etoile stands outside. The amount of rooms is the great thing, and I believe it to be the place best suited for us, at a not unreasonable price in Paris.

Georgina and Lady Olliffe [1] send their loves. Georgina and I add ours to Mamey, Katey, the Plorn, and Harry.

Ever affectionately.

CCLXXVII. W. H. WILLS

49, Avenue des Champs Elysées, Paris,
Friday, October 19, 1855.

My dear Wills, — After going through unheard-of bedevilments (of which you shall have further particulars as soon as I come right side upwards, which may happen in a day or two), we are at last established here in a series of closets, but a great many of them, with all Paris perpetually passing under the windows. Letters may have been wandering after me to that home in the Rue de Balzac, which is to be the subject of more lawsuits between the man who let it to me and the man who would n't let me have possession, than any other house that ever was built. But I have had no letters at all, and have been — ha, ha! — a maniac since last Monday.

I will try my hand at that paper for "H. W." to-morrow, if I can get a yard of flooring to sit upon; but we have really been in that state of topsy-turvyhood that even that has been an unattainable luxury, and may yet be for eight-and-forty hours or so, for anything I see to the contrary.

Ever faithfully.

CCLXXVIII. THE SAME

49, Avenue des Champs Elysées, Paris,
Sunday Night, October 21, 1855.

My dear Wills, — Coming here from a walk this afternoon, I found your letter of yesterday awaiting me. I send this reply

[1] Wife of the late Sir Joseph Olliffe, physician to the British Embassy.

by my brother Alfred, who is here, and who returns home to-morrow. You should get it at the office early on Tuesday.

I will go to work to-morrow, and will send you, please God, an article by Tuesday's post, which you will get on Wednesday forenoon. Look carefully to the proof, as I shall not have time to receive it for correction. When you arrange about sending your parcels, will you ascertain, and communicate to me, the prices of telegraph messages? It will save me trouble, having no foreign servant (though French is in that respect a trump), and may be useful on an emergency.

I have two floors here — *entresol* and first — in a doll's-house, but really pretty within, and the view without astounding, as you will say when you come. The house is on the Exposition side, about half a quarter of a mile above Franconi's, of course on the other side of the way, and close to the Jardin d'Hiver. Each room has but one window in it, but we have no fewer than six rooms (besides the back ones) looking on the Champs Elysées, with the wonderful life perpetually flowing up and down. We have no spare room, but excellent stowage for the whole family, including a capital dressing-room for me, and a really slap-up kitchen near the stairs. Damage for the whole, seven hundred francs a month.

But, sir — but — when Georgina, the servants, and I were here for the first night (Catherine and the rest being at Boulogne), I heard Georgy restless — turned out — asked: "What 's the matter?" "Oh, it 's dreadfully dirty. I can't sleep for the smell of my room." Imagine all my stage-managerial energies multiplied at daybreak by a thousand. Imagine the porter, the porter's wife, the porter's wife's sister, a feeble upholsterer of enormous age from round the corner, and all his workmen (four boys), summoned. Imagine the partners in the proprietorship of the apartment, and martial little man with François-Prussian beard, also summoned. Imagine your inimitable chief briefly explaining that dirt is not in his way, and that he is driven to madness, and that he devotes himself to no coat and a dirty face, until the apartment is thoroughly purified. Imagine co-proprietors at first astounded, then urging that "it 's not the custom," then wavering, then affected, then confiding their utmost private sorrows to the Inimitable, offering new carpets (accepted), embraces (not accepted), and really responding like French bricks. Sallow, unbrushed, unshorn, awful, stalks the

Inimitable through the apartment until last night. Then all the improvements were concluded, and I do really believe the place to be now worth eight or nine hundred francs per month. You must picture it as the smallest place you ever saw, but as exquisitely cheerful and vivacious, clean as anything human can be, and with a moving panorama always outside, which is Paris in itself.

You mention a letter from Miss Coutts as to Mrs. Brown's illness, which you say is "inclosed to Mrs. Charles Dickens."

It is not inclosed, and I am mad to know where she writes from that I may write to her. Pray set this right, for her uneasiness will be greatly intensified if she have no word from me.

I thought we were to give £1,700 for the house at Gad's Hill. Are we bound to £1,800? Considering the improvements to be made, it is a little too much, is n't it? I have a strong impression that at the utmost we were only to divide the difference, and not to pass £1,750. You will set me right if I am wrong. But I don't think I am.

I write very hastily, with the piano playing and Alfred looking for this.

Ever, my dear Wills, faithfully.

CCLXXIX. W. H. WILLS

49, Avenue des Champs Elysées,
Wednesday, October 24, 1855.

My dear Wills, — In the Gad's Hill matter, I too would like to try effect of "not budging." *So do not go beyond the* £1,700. Considering what I should have to expend on the one hand, and the low price of stock on the other, I do not feel disposed to go beyond that mark. They won't let a purchaser escape for the sake of the £100, I think. And Austin was strongly of opinion, when I saw him last, that £1,700 was enough.

You cannot think how pleasant it is to me to find myself generally known and liked here. If I go into a shop to buy anything, and give my card, the officiating priest or priestess brightens up, and says: "Ah! c'est l'écrivain célèbre! Monsieur porte un nom très distingué. Mais! je suis honoré et intéressé de voir Monsieur Dick-in. Je lis un des livres de

monsieur tous les jours" (in the "Moniteur"). And a man who brought some little verses home last night said: "On connaît bien en France que Monsieur Dick-in prend sa position sur la dignité de la littérature. Ah! c'est grande chose! Et ses caractères" (this was to Georgina, while she unpacked) "sont si spirituellement tournées! Cette Madame Tojare" (Todgers), "ah! qu'elle est drôle et précisément comme une dame que je connais à Calais."

You cannot have any doubt about this place, if you will only recollect it is the great main road from the Place de la Concorde to the Barrière de l'Etoile.

Ever faithfully.

CCLXXX. MONSIEUR REGNIER

Wednesday, November 21, 1855.

MY DEAR REGNIER, — In thanking you for the box you kindly sent me the day before yesterday, let me thank you a thousand times for the delight we derived from the representation of your beautiful and admirable piece. I have hardly ever been so affected and interested in any theatre. Its construction is in the highest degree excellent, the interest absorbing, and the whole conducted by a masterly hand to a touching and natural conclusion.

Through the whole story from beginning to end, I recognise the true spirit and feeling of an artist, and I most heartily offer you and your fellow labourer my felicitations on the success you have achieved. That it will prove a very great and lasting one, I cannot for a moment doubt.

O my friend! If I could see an English actress with but one hundredth part of the nature and art of Madame Plessy, I should believe our English theatre to be in a fair way towards its regeneration. But I have no hope of ever beholding such a phenomenon. I may as well expect ever to see upon an English stage an accomplished artist, able to write and to embody what he writes, like you.

Faithfully yours ever.

CCLXXXI. MADAME VIARDOT

49, Avenue des Champs Elysées,
Monday, December 3, 1855.

Dear Madame Viardot, — Mrs. Dickens tells me that you have only borrowed the first number of "Little Dorrit," and are going to send it back. Pray do nothing of the sort, and allow me to have the great pleasure of sending you the succeeding numbers as they reach me. I have had such delight in your great genius, and have so high an interest in it and admiration of it, that I am proud of the honour of giving you a moment's intellectual pleasure.

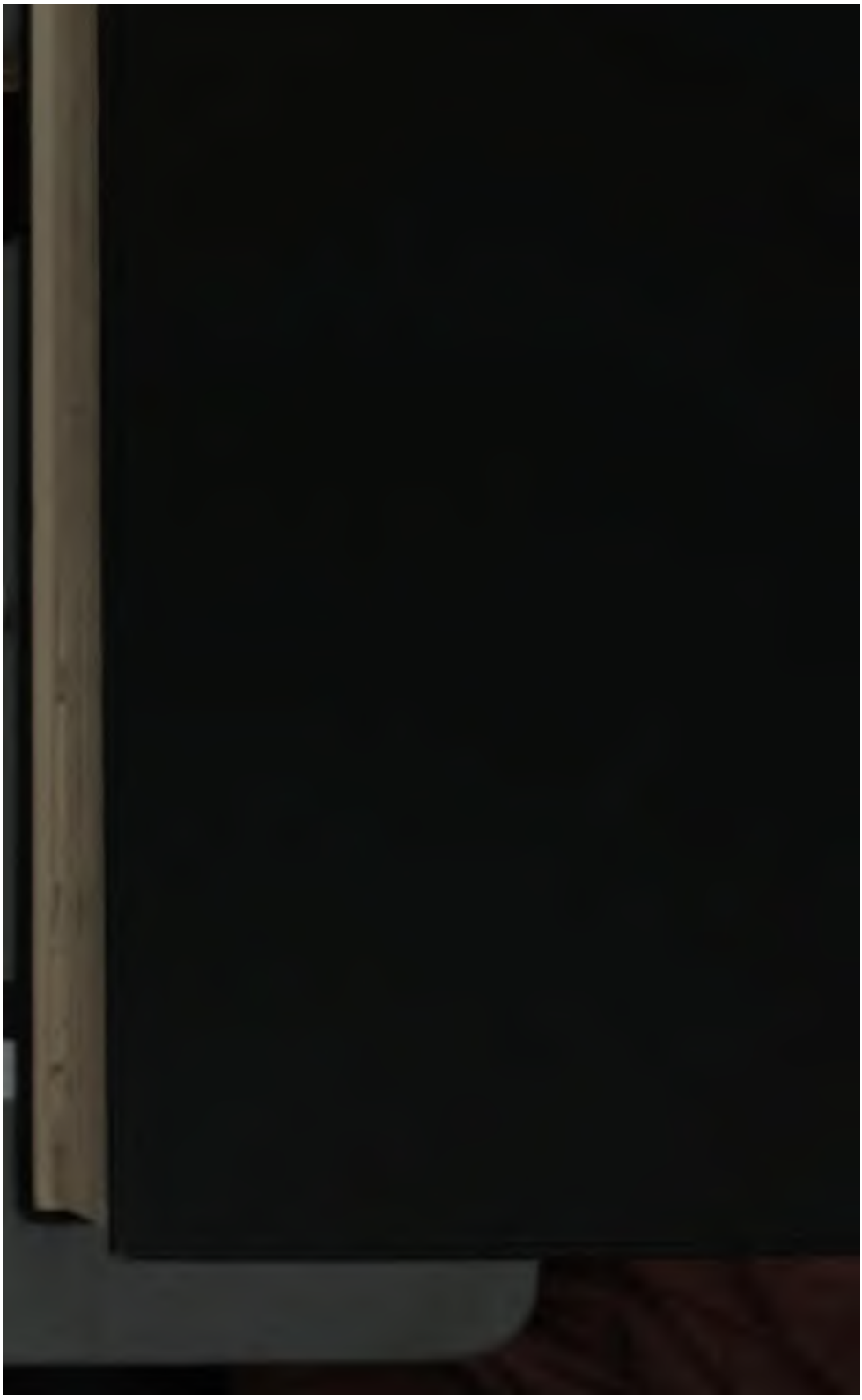
Believe me, very faithfully yours.

CCLXXXII. THE HON. MRS. WATSON

Tavistock House, Sunday, December 23, 1855.

My dear Mrs. Watson, — I have a moment in which to redeem my promise, of putting you in possession of my Little Friend No. 2, before the general public. It is, of course, at the disposal of your circle, but until the month is out, is understood to be a prisoner in the castle.

If I had time to write anything, I should still quite vainly try to tell you what interest and happiness I had in once more seeing you among your dear children. Let me congratulate you on your Eton boys. They are so handsome, frank, and genuinely modest, that they charmed me. A kiss to the little fair-haired darling and the rest; the love of my heart to every stone in the old house.

Enormous effect at Sheffield. But really not a better audience perceptively than at Peterboro', for that could hardly be, but they were more enthusiastically demonstrative, and they took the line, "and to Tiny Tim who did NOT die," with a most prodigious shout and roll of thunder.

Ever, my dear friend, most faithfully yours.